

SPIRITUAL REFINING:  
PART II.  
OR, A  
TREATISE  
OF  
SINNERS

*With its*

*Causes, Differences, Mitigations and Aggravations;  
Particularly of the desperate Deceitfulness of Mans  
Heart, of Presumptuous and Reigning Sins, and of  
Hypocrisie and Formality in Religion.*

*Also occasionally handling the Uprightness and Tenderneſs  
of a Gracious Heart; and therein discovering the nature of  
a misguided Conscience, as also of secret and unknown  
ſins that the best men are guilty of, with Directions to  
the godly under their fears about them.*

*Shewing withall, That a strict scrutiny into a mans heart and wayes, with a holy  
fear of sinning, doth consist with a Gospel-life of faith and joy in the holy Ghost.*

All tending to { *Unmask counterfeit Christians.  
Terrifie the Ungodly.  
Comfort and Direct the Doubting Saint.  
Humble Man.  
Exalt the Grace of God.*

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IN XLII. SERMONS,

By *Anthony Burgess* sometime Fellow of *Emanuel Colledge* in  
*Cambridge*, and now Pastor of *Sutton-Coldfield* in *Warwickshire*.

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*London*, Printed by *A. M.* for *Thomas Underhill* at the Sign of the  
Anchor and Bible in *Pauls Church-yard*, near the little North-door, 1654.





Lord God his art good

Evening Day ~~at~~ Evening  
 Christ's Church  
 of St. Peter's

and his last day

Mr. Tom Garrison

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### To the Reader.

sometimes hinder the perceiving of our spiritual life; and although it be a known saying of *Austin*, *That whosoever doth believe doth perceive and feel he doth believe*, yet that is to be understood of a potential aptitude, if there be no strong impediment, otherwise grace and the assurance of it are many times separable, hence the promises are made to him that hath grace, not that knoweth he hath it.

4. *Let them yet further distinguish between the having of grace absolutely, and the enjoying of it according to our desires.* The godly man sometimes staggereth, questioning whether he hath grace, because he hath not as much as he would have and praieth for: Even as some covetous men think not themselves rich, because they have not so vast an estate as they have inordinately propounded to themselves.

5. *Let not the godly man make the work of grace upon another mans heart the Rule upon his own;* yet how often will the tender heart be making such comparisons, because they have not been wrought upon in such a manner, and to such a degree as others whom they know, therefore they are apt to doubt of all. But we reade in the Scripture of different conversions of men to Christ, and therefore we must not limit God to one way.

6. *Let them not fail to distinguish between partial hypocrisie and total.* There is no godly man but he hath hypocrisie in him, as well as other sins, and that sin is ready to put it self forth, as well as other; but the presence and the predominancy must be distinguished, else woe be to the most upright man that liveth.

Lastly, This must not be forgotten, that even in hypocrisie or any other sin predominating, there must be difference made *between a violent resisted prevalency, and a constant,*

### To the Reader,

*a constant, total and quiet submission to it.* David in the matter of *Uriah* had hypocrisie and guile of heart, even prevailing over him, but it was contrary to the principles of grace within, and therefore sin did not alwaies keep durable and quiet possession. Infomuch that a difference is to be made about a godly mans sins of infirmities; some are ordinary, but some (such as *Dauids* we mentioned) are extraordinary; in these sinne hath more reigning power, yet it can never obtain a full and quiet possession.

These observations I commend to that Christian, who shall with all care fall upon that duty of searching the deceitfulness of his heart. By this light his holy trembling will not interrupt his joy, nor will his Evangelical joy abate his godly trembling. But as it is in matter of doctrine to be believed, it's our duty to try and search, yet for all that we must not be scepticks, but hold fast the truth; so in matters to be practised, we are to discern and make a difference between truth and counterfeit, yet we must not be alwaies inconstant, never perswaded in our hearts.

I shall conclude, when I have advertised thee that some corrective alterations and additional explications might conveniently be applied to some passages in the Book, but my remote distance from the Printer, did absolutely prohibit it. Therefore what is presented to thee, improve it practically, remembering that of our Saviour, *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them,* *John 13.17.* I rest,

Sutton Coldfield  
Dec 9. 1653.



Thy hearty well-willer

ANTHONY BURGESS.



THE  
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OF THIS  
TREATISE.



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## The P R I N T E R to the R E A D E R.

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R E A D E R,



*Concerning any Escapes that have happened in the Printing of this Book, at so great a distance from the Reverend Author, I hope I may truly say, there's not any judicious Reader will stumble at any word misprinted, but may correct it himself; and for others they use not to be curious in this matter. I pray thee put Errors for Heresies in the Contents of the 17<sup>th</sup> Sermon.*

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A  
TREATISE  
OF  
SINNERS.

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SECT. I.

Of the Deceitfulness and Guile of  
Mans Heart.

SERM. I.

*The Ingredients and Demonstrations of  
the Deceitfulness of the Heart.*

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JEREM. 17.9.

*The heart is deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?*

**I**N the former part of this Treatise, I finished my Discourse concerning the work of Grace in the hearts of Gods people, under the several Notions and Titles it hath, viz. Regeneration, Sanctification, Conversion, &c. Now my intent is, to shew the contrary or opposite to all these,

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these. For although it be a general Rule, that *Rectum est index sui & obliqui*, Truth at the same time discovers its self and its contrary error; yet it is as general and known a Rule, That contraries set together do more illustrate one another. That this work may be the better managed, I shall first treat on the Deceitfulness of mans heart in the general, and when that is clearly discovered, then all the particular and partial hypocrisies of it may the sooner be manifested.

Come we then to our Text; and for the Coherence of it, know, the Prophet in this Chapter prophesieth of *Judahs* Captivity and Calamity: But she is not made a Captive to men, before she had made her self a Captive to sinne; Other Lords ruled over her, because so many lusts ruled in her. And the Prophet doth therefore declare the causes of their punishment, that God might be justified, and that in their own Consciences: Hence *ver. 1.* he saith, *Their sinne was written with a pen of iron upon the table of their heart.* The guilt of their iniquities was indelibly upon their own consciences, they could not but be convinced of it, they could not hide it from God. Now the sins that were the causes of their judgement, or the vapours that made this thunder and lightening, were several:

1. Idolatry, *ver. 1, 2.*

2. A carnal confidence in humane strength, forsaking the Lord; *He maketh flesh his arm.* And this sin of carnal confidence is excellently described by the cursed effects of it, as also by the opposite grace, trusting in God, and the blessed issue whereof. Upon this the Prophet taketh occasion to go to the root of all wickedness, and that is in the heart of a man, which is the poisoned fountain from whence all these infected streams flow. So that in the Text you have,

1. A Proposition, *The heart is deceitfull:* And in that observe, 1. The Subject, *the heart*, that which is the chief and principal part of a man, the fountain of all knowledge, affections and resolutions: so as some Philosophers made the head the chief seat or metropolis of the soul in all her operations, so



so the Scripture makes the heart the chief place of all. Thus you see it is not the Eye or the Tongue, but the Heart, the best, the most inward part of man. As the Psalmist to expresse the high impiety of some men, said, *their inward parts were very wickednesse*, Psal. 5. 9. or as in the Hebrew *wickednesses*, the abstract for the concrete, and the plurall number for the singular, to expresse the exceeding sinfulness thereof.

2. You have the Predicate, *its deceitfull*: The Hebrew word comes of a root to supplant, and therefore *Jacob* had his name from it, because he supplanted *Esau* about his birthright, Thus the heart of a man is full of deceit and guile, whereby he cosins himself of his own everlasting happinesse.

3. There is the aggravation, *above all things*: There is nothing in the world hath so much deceit.

4. There is the consequent effect, *desperately wicked*: The deceitfulness of it makes it incurable: As those parts of the body, *viz.* the Lungs, which are so placed that no remedy can easily come at them, are more incurably diseased; thus the heart of a man, having so many secret and false windings, it is very hardly healed.

5. This deceitfulness is aggravated by the inscrutability of it by any but God alone; *Who can know it: I the Lord search the heart, &c.* so that the Lord only who made the heart, he knoweth all the depths of it. Observe;

*That the heart of every man naturally is full of deceit and guile, Observe. and therefore desperately wicked.*

Solomon spake of four things hard to be found out, The going of a Ship on the sea, a Snake upon the rock, &c. Prov. 30. 19. because these leave no steps to trace them by; but you see an harder thing then all these to finde out, *viz.* the heart of a man, and that not only in respect of others, others cannot know what is in a mans heart; but of our own selves, we are not able to dive into those depths: there is an abyss, a deep within every mans heart, whereby he knoweth not the bottom of his wayes: Who thinks not but that he repenteth, he beleeveth, he loveth God, when (alas) his heart deceiveth him all the while: So that as this is a large subject to preach upon, so its a very profitable and necessary point. Indeed this



*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

is the beginning of our conversion, when a man comes to be undeceived : Till this deceitfulnesse of the heart be in part removed, there is a great gulf between thee and true repentance.

The Ingredients of a deceitfull heart.

1. It implieth a great depth in every mans heart.

To open this let us consider first, What goeth to make up this deceitfulnesse of the heart, for there are many ingredients in it. As

1. *It implieth a great depth in every mans heart* : That as your deep waters are hardly fathomed, men cannot discern what is in the bottom of them, so mans heart hath an abyffe. As God is said to have his deep things; *The deep things of God*, saith Paul, 1 Cor. 2. 16. and Satan his depths, *The depths of Satan* in the Revelation, Rev. 2. 24. so man hath his deep things also, insomuch that no man can ever be acquainted with his own heart, that doth not search deep, dive deep into the secret things of his soul, oh, men would not so easily perswade themselves that they do repent, that their wayes please God, that they have good hearts, if they would search to the bottom : insomuch that the Scripture presseth this as a great and necessary duty, to search our hearts, *to examine our selves, to commune with our own hearts*, and that *on our beds*, and *to be still*, Psal. 4. 4. We are to do it most exactly, and to take the most quiet and fittest time, for there are thousands and thousands of lusts lye in the bottom of the soul that do not appear at first.

2. The crookednesse and unevennesse of the heart.

2. *It implieth the crookednesse and unevennesse of the heart.* Even as the Serpent that goes in a crooked and uneven manner, is said to be *more subtle then other beasts of the field* : Gen. 3. 1. Thus is it with a mans heart, it hath many crooked turnings in it : when you would think you were going in a way towards God, presently it hurries aside to the world, or to some lusts ; therefore Psal. 18. 26. to the pure and upright man, is opposed the man that is *crooked froward*, or crooked ; and therefore God is said to be *froward with such a man* ; the Hebrew word signifies to wrastle with a man, so as by art to throw him down ; and the same word is attributed both to God and man, so that while the deceitfull man doth like the wrestler, turn himself this way and that way into many motions and gestures to obtain his end, even as *Jehu* and the Pharisee, God

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on the other side will overthrow him, and be above him in all his craft. The heart then is deceitfull, because it hath many crooked turning wayes, sometimes to God, and sometimes to the world and Satan.

3. *There is implied the divers concavities and secret recesses of the heart:* That as the Labyrinth had many secret hollow places and windings, out of which a man could never expedite himself; thus it is with a mans heart, its like a vast wilderness where there is no trodden path or way, like some deep vaults where are many horrid cells and holes: This the Apostle excellently expreſſeth, *Heb. 12. 4.* where Gods word is said to pierce even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart. How many concavities, secret lurking holes, wheels within wheels, are here in a mans heart? so that only by the light of Gods word are we ever able to come to the *intima* and *minima* that are in our souls.

3.  
The divers  
concavities  
and secret re-  
cesses of the  
heart.

4. *To this deceitfulnesse, inconstancy and mutability is a great cause:* The heart of man is therefore deceitfull, because it can be so suddenly put into severall and contrary shapes; it will hate what it loved, it will loath what it desired; it will appear in fits as if really looking towards good, and then presently cast off all again; no Polypus, no Camelion hath more colours then the heart of a man will have. This vertibility and unsteadfastnesse is a grand cause of all that guile within us, and the Scripture compares this deceitfulnesse to a deceitfull bow, *Hos. 7. 16.* that as the archer stretching out his bow, and even ready to deliver out the arrow at a mark, at the very nick the bow breaks and all falls upon the archer. Thus it is with a people, you would think they had set their hearts for God, they were pitched on him, they were now approaching and drawing nigh to him, but presently all breaks and falls to the clean contrary. Hence the Scripture brands every man with being a liar, *Rom. 3. 4.* Every mans heart is a lying heart, till it be sanctified, there is no beleiving of it, no trusting of it. Now if you would set this down for a principle, O Lord, how is it with me, how shall I know when I am godly, when I have done my duty? this I conclude on, that I have to do with a

4.  
Inconstancy  
and mutabi-  
lity.

notorious liar, branded by God for a liar, and that is my own heart. Oh let me get out of this deceit, let me beleve lyes no longer.

5.  
The horrible  
Ignorance and  
darknesse of  
the soul.

5. Another cause of the deceitfulness of the heart, *s, the horrible ignorance and darknesse which covers the whole soul.* He that walketh in darknesse, knoweth not whether he goeth, *Joh. 12.35.* no wonder if such an one be alwayes out of his way. They cannot but tread or fall into the ditch who are blinde: Now thus it is with a mans heart, It's like that deep created at first, *and darknesse was over the deep, Gen. 1.* Those depths of thy heart are covered all over with darknesse, with ignorance and blindenesse of minde, *Eph. 5.8.* Hence converted men are called light, and unconverted darknesse. How then can it be otherwise, but that every man should deceive his own soul, for he hath no light to discover or to discern all that filth that is in him. Thou art in a dungeon full of noisome vicious lusts that rise upon thee, and fill thee as so many Egyptian frogs, yet thou knowest nothing, thou thinkest all is well. Come out of the dark then if thou wouldst be no longer deceived.

6.  
Self-flattery  
and self-love.

6. *Self-flattery and self-love*, this doth in a great manner make the heart deceitfull. An over-weening of a mans self, *Every mans way is right in his own eyes*, saith Solomon, *Prov. 21.2.* Who would think this were possible! yet if you single out man by man, Every one would judge his own waies right. Therefore judging and condemning of a mans self is that which every true convert first set upon. He doth no longer justifie himself, no more flatter and delude himself; yea he cries out, *Wo be to me that I called darknesse light, and good evil.* Thus the convert bewaileth himself, but till this work of grace come, every man is a Pygmalion, he is in love with himself, he will never be convinced that he is undone, that his estate is damnable, that he is out of Christ and so hopelesse: Oh no, he is too much in love with himself ever to be thus perswaded. *Thou thoughtest*, saith God, *that I was such an one as thy self*, *Psa. 50.21.* Thus a man through self-love being deceived, imagineth such a mercifull God to himself as he would have, and judges of God according to his own disposition: as that Ro-  
man



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man Painter being to paint a Goddesse, drew it after the image of that woman he was in love with : thus self-love fills a man with spiritual drunkennesse, so that he is altogether deceived in what he thinketh or doth.

Lastly, *The deceitfulnesse of the heart is not only from innate causes, but wonderfully increased by an outward, which is the devil,* <sup>7.</sup> Mans heart the devils throne. who hath his throne and seat in every mans heart ; that as we read of bodies possessed by the devil, so every mans soul is spiritually possessed by Satan. *Ephes. 2.* the devil is called *the Prince of this world,* and is said to rule in the hearts of the disobedient. Hence he is called *the strong one that possesseth the house,* till Christ a stronger then he come and conquer him. *Luk. 11. 21.* Now the devil he is *the Dragon,* *Rev. 12. 3.* and that old Serpent full of craft and subtilty, and so the heart of a man being his instrument must needs partake of his guile. The devil at first used the Serpent because more subtile then other beasts of the field ; so he delights to use the hearts of men, which are the seat of their wisdom and understanding ; and where there are the best parts and greatest abilities, still he desires them more then others.

Thus you see how many wayes this deceitfullnesse comes to be in every mans heart. It was the voice of the heathen Oracle, *Nosce teipsum,* Know thy self ; they thought this the beginning of wisdom, and certainly he is in a ready way to salvation, who begins to distrust his own heart, that begins to think, I have given too much credit, I have easily beleev'd what my heart hath told me, and there is no greater folly in the world then this ; what saith the Wise man, *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool,* *Prov. 28. 26.* Certainly not in the world only, but even in the Church are such fools that put a vain confidence in their own hearts ; that they are well, that they repent, that they love God.

In the next place we shall give you severall Signs or demonstrations *a posteriori,* that the heart of a man is thus deceitfull. Signs and demonstrations of the deceitfullnesse of the heart.

As first, *In that a man will generally acknowledge the necessity and duty of godlinesse, but then come to his particular, that he must live such a godly life, he must thus strive to enter in at the strait gate.* I. Men will ac-



knowledge the necessity of godlinesse in the generall, but will not be so for their own particular.

2.

They will condemn sin in the general, and yet will live in it.

gate, that he cannot yeeld to. What a grosse deceiving of a mans self is this ! If to be godly in the generall, if to walk holily in the abstract be so good and necessary, is it not also for thee in particular ? We read of a young man, that came with much voluntary readinesse to Christ, and Christ seeing him so confident, to discover the deceit in his heart, bid him to observe the Commandements ; he replieth, He had kept all from his youth, *Matth. 19. 20.* whereupon our Saviour gives him a personall command to discover the falshood of his heart, *Go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor ;* which presently was like the jealousie water to the adulteresse woman, made his thigh to rot, *he went away sorrowfull, for he had great possessions:* I bring this instance to shew, that *dolus est in generalibus*, generall commands, and generall duties people approve of, but then when it comes to their particular, they fly back and discover their nakednesse. Is not this a palpable deceit, for a man to commend godlinesse, to admire an holy life, and yet when it comes to his particular, he no wayes to endeavour after it ?

So secondly, on the contrary, *The deceitfulnesse of the heart appeareth, in that men will discommend, yea and condemn sinne in the generall ; and yet in their particular, practise, wallow in it.* How can men come to be thus grossely deceived ? They will acknowledge drunkennesse, lusts, oaths are grievous sins, that God is offended by them, and hell belongs to such ; yet for their particular you shall finde them committing such sins. Thus as *David*, when the Parable was of a man in the generall, that had stolen his neighbours Lamb, his wrath was kindled and he must have severe punishment, *2 Sam. 12. 6.* but he did not know he was the man. Oh thou that readest and hearest every day, *swear not at all*, and that thinkest not, I am the swearer, *James 4.* that hearest, *be not drunk with wine wherein is excesse*, *Ephes. 4.* and that thinkest not I am the drunkard, and so of every sin: Oh were it not for that abyss and depth of guile in thy heart, thou couldst never practise that in particular which thou condemnest in generall.

3.

In that there is no grace or

3. *The deceitfulnesse of the heart appears, in that there is no kind of grace or duty required by God, but the heart of a man will do the counterfeite of it. It will do that which is like it, and yet differ*

*Of the deceitfulness and guile of mans heart.*

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differ from it as much as earth from Heaven; Thus, doth a godly *David* humble himself upon the Prophets admonition? so doth *Ahab*. Doth a *David* finde gladnesse in his heart by the word? so the temporary believer receives the word with joy, *Matth. 13*. Whatsoever the godly do in the truth and reall power of grace, that the hearts even of unregenerate men have sometimes a faint imitation of: as it was with *Pharaohs* Butler and Baker, they both dreamed, and their dreames were very like, insomuch that when *Joseph* interpreted the Butlers dream, that his head should be lifted up; the Baker he was encouraged and told his dream also, but that was to signifie his head should be lifted up, not to Heaven, but dishonour, to be hanged. Thus in Christianity both seem to beleeve alike, to repent alike, but the principle, the manner and the end have a world of difference: Even as the waters of the sea and of the clouds, though both are water alike, yet one is brackish and salt, the other sweet; insomuch that there is scarce any grace which some unregenerate men are not said to have, as to beleeve, to repent, because they have the outward resemblance of it, so that as excellent Painters have drawn the image of things so lively, that the spectators have almost been deceived, thinking life it self to be in them, thus it is with the hypocrisie and falshood in ours hearts.

duty required by God but the heart of a man will do the counterfeits of it.

4. *This deceitfulness doth appear, not only in that they can do those things that are like Grace, but they have such a sense and a perswasion upon them that they are indeed the very graces.* And oh the wofull tragedy that this deceit hath made, men being perswaded of themselves, that they have the Spirit of God and his graces, when they are nothing but the deceitfull motions of their own hearts. Did the foolish Virgins perceive any defect in themselves? did they not go out as confidently to meet the bridegroom as the wise, *Matth. 25*? What did our Saviour mean by this, but that many Christians would live and die with a confident boldnesse that they are going to Christ their bridegroom, and not have the least thought that they want oyl, that they want the main: Oh that this truth might fall like live coales of fire into your breast. There is a delusion, a false perswasion upon most mens hearts: they are affected

4. And be perswaded that they are indeed the very graces.

*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans Heart.*

as if they were godly, as if they did belong to God, when there is a vast gulf between them. I do not speak this to unsettle the tender and godly heart, that he should doubt of his condition, but to ransack the presumptuous and self flattering heart: Oh it will one day be not as thou thinkest, as thou feelest, as thou art perswaded, but as the truth of grace is indeed in thee.

5.  
In that men will seem to love and honour those godly men that lived in former times, but cannot abide those that now live and follow their steps.

5. *The deceitfulnesse of the heart appears, in that men will seem to love and honour those godly men that lived in former times, but now cannot abide those that live with them, though following such mens steps.* This is a deceit in mans heart: observe it in the Pharisees; oh how religiously and devoutly do they speak: If we had lived in the Prophets daies, we should not have killed or stoned them, and therefore they built up famous monuments for their memory: yet they killed the Apostles who lived in their daies, who walked in the steps of the Prophets. From thence one of the Ancients well exhorteth, If you hear a man praising the ancient Doctors and Teachers of the Church, see how he is affected to his present Teachers: Thou that commendest *Paul, Peter, Austin, Chrysostom*, their zeal and courage against wickednesse, if thou dost not love the present zeal and godly fervor of thy Teachers, its from the deceitfulnesse of thy heart. The other demonstrations of this guilfull heart I shall insist on the next day.

*Use.*

To conclude, Let this instruct thee in the fountain and rise of all our calamity, this deceitfull heart is the root of all thy spirituall evil: therefore thou thinkest not of repenting or turning to God, therefore our preaching and your hearing is in vain. As we say, Its impossible to cure the Church of *Rome* because she hath *lesum principium*, she holds she cannot erre; so its here; Therefore thou art not perswaded to change thy heart, thy life, because thou art deceived as if all were well already; Oh if your hearts were like white blanks as *Aristotle* said the soul was, then we might the more easily write the Law of God in your hearts; but it is all over bloached and blotted, There are destructive principles in you, against which there is no disputing, no preaching till God remove the very fundamentall principles in you. Begin then with this truth,

I have



I have been a miserable, blinde, deceived wretch all my life time, I verily thought such a way would leade to heaven, my heart told me all was well, I need not be troubled: but oh how am I confounded, how greatly was I out of the way till God opened my eyes.



S E R M. II.

*More Signs and Demonstrations of the  
deceitfulnesse of the Heart.*

J E R. 17. 9.

*The heart is deceitfull above all things, who can know it?*

**T** Here remain further Signs and Manifestations of the deceitfullnesse of mans heart; To which I proceed: And

First, *This is a plain sign of the grosse hypocrisie and guile of a mans heart, that though a man live in grosse and notorious sins that are conscientiam vastantia, that lay waste and desolate the conscience, yet he hopes for salvation: You would think that no such mad delusion could enter in a mans heart; yet what is more frequent then this imposture over the whole Church? Be not deceived (saith Paul) neither adulterers nor unrighteous persons shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Observe that caution, Be not deceived. This supposeth that they were very apt to delude their own souls, thinking they might be saved, notwithstanding the commission of those notorious sins, and oh how many do drink down this sweet poison! if not, how could so much wickednesse and ungodlinesse be found amongst Christians! or if any one sinnet be questioned in this point, whether he hope to be saved, he will without any scruple an-*

6.

That though a man live in grosse sins, yet he hopes for salvation.



*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

swer in the affirmative, Yes that he doth, God forbid else. Now where can he have this hope? Whence can his heart perswade him? Doth not every leaf in the Scripture stand like a fiery Sword to keep him out of Paradise? Doth not every Chapter in the Word of God meet him as an Angel with a naked Sword to *Balaam* to stop him in the way, yet for all this he blesteth his soul, and saith, It will go well with him. Were not a man bewitched and deceived in a grosse manner, he could no more judge that his way was a way of salvation, or his life a life of happinesse, then that the Sun is a black coal, or light is darknesse. If hell ever be made heaven, if clods of earth be made stars, then he may think such as he is shall be set on Thrones of glory. Oh beloved how do we pity poor bewitched creatures, that have lost their limbs, their senses! but here is a spirituall witchery, an heart-sorcery, that is above all expression. Think of this again and again, you that live in prophane courses, you need not say, Who will tell me what will become of me? how shall I know whether this life of mine will be rewarded with happinesse? Alas! even the very blinde may see this; The Scripture hath made and set it up like a Beacon, that all may take notice of it, viz. That he that *soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption*, Gal. 6. 8.

7.  
To rest contented with the priviledges of Christianity, and not regarding the duties they enforce.

2. Another Sign of the deceitfulnesse of the heart, is to rest contented in the priviledges and promises in Christianity, not at all regarding the duties and obligations they enforce. They are satisfied in the Titles of Beleevers, of being Christians by profession, and as for the offices and duties which these do indispensably command, they do not regard them. Now what palpable hypocrisie is this, to divide those things that God hath so inseparably conjoyned? Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity: 2 Tim. 1. 19. Those that cried Lord, Lord, and had prophesied, yea, and cast out devils in his name, because they had not destroyed the works of the devil in their lives, but were workers of iniquity, therefore Christ bid them depart, he knew them not. Mat. 7. Every man then that is baptized, that is by profession a Christian, and yet walketh not according to all that godly order Christ prescribeth, This mans heart deceiveth him: He is not what he

he thinks himself to be, and one day it will appear so: Thus the Apostle *Jam. 1. 26.* *If any man seem to be religious, and brid-  
leth not his tongue, he deceiveth himself, μαελοζ'ει*, he puts a  
false Syllogism upon himself, he takes *non causa pro causa*, He  
thinks Religion in the seeming appearance of it is enough:  
So we may make that of the Apostle an universall Proposi-  
tion, *If any man seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue,*  
his eyes, especially his heart and affections from all manner of  
lusts and impieties, this mans Religion is a meer deceit and  
snare to him: This is a dangerous and an universall deceitfull-  
nesse; therefore the Apostle *James* in that generall Epistle of  
his, spends a great part industriously to shew, that that faith  
is a dead faith, and he is but a vain man that cannot demon-  
strate the profession of his faith by the fruits of a godly life.  
Christ was not satisfied to see leaves upon the figtree, he look-  
ed for fruit, and because that was wanting, he cursed it with  
that heavy curse, *Never fruit to grow more of it.* Come then  
out of all thy disguises, thou art a childe of the devil, and  
in the state of gall and bitternesse, though with *Simon Ma-  
gus* thou makest a profession of thy faith and art baptized,  
and observe why *Simon Magnus* was so, because *his heart was  
not right within him*, *Act. 8. 23.* He did not think so, or per-  
ceive so, till *Peter* told him, and then he prayeth for par-  
don: Thou therefore that dost not live in duties according  
to Christian priviledges, lay off thy counterseit dresses, God  
knoweth thee; It's here, as when the Kings Wife went dis-  
guised to *Elisba* the Prophet, while she was entring in at the  
door; Come in thou Wife of *Jeroboam* saith he; It was no  
hiding from the Prophet of the Lord: and thus may thy own  
heart say, Come thou hypocrite, thou false heart, bewail  
thy guile, thou dost mock God and man, it is in vain to cover  
any thing from God.

3. The deceitfulnesse of the heart appeareth in those frequent  
and many commands to search it, to try it, to ransack into the  
very bottom of it: Now if the heart were plain and open, if  
it had no depths, no secret windings, what need all this, you  
are commanded to make a private search as for theeves and  
spies in your own breasts: How often is that Exhortation,  
8. The hearts de-  
ceitfulnesse ap-  
pears in those  
many com-  
mands to  
search and  
try it.

*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

*Let us search and try our waies, Examine and prove your own selves:* As the Artificer is carefull to bring his gold to the touchstone, to see whether good or bad, yea *Phil. 4. Commune with your own hearts upon your beds, and be still;* digge into them, some translate, sweep them diligently, others; as the woman took a candle and swept the house for her lost groat; Oh the lusts, the corruptions of thy heart, do not at the first, second, or third search appear, Thy lust may lie in thy heart, as *Achans wedge of Gold*, covered in the earth, and hid among other stufte, thou maist live forty or threescore years, and yet be a great stranger to thy own heart, not know what sins lie there, what corruptions prevail over thee, and therefore the Scripture as the first initiall and preparative work of all commands to Search our hearts, yea, we must take fit times, and be still, with much meditation and quietnesse make a scrutiny and search into our hearts, that those snakes and worms which lie under ground may be brought to light. But how is this duty neglected! the very Papists will rise up at judgement and condemn us, who have hours on purpose appointed them for this examination and search of the heart: and *Swarez* a Jesuite said, he more prized that time, then all the other wherein he handled those voluminous Controversies: the truth is, studying your hearts, searching into your hearts, disputing with them, is the most profitable and advantageous study that can be: Oh that you would read those books more, that you would understand the sense and meaning of your hearts, this would quickly make you a scholar in Christs school.

To understand the motions of the Heavens and not of thy own heart; to know the natures and operations of Herbs and Plants, and not of thy own soul; to measure the dimensions of bodies, and not the depth and length and bredth of thy own heart, is but a barren knowledge. We may say, Physician heal thy self, Astronomer measure thy own heart, Philosopher understand thy own nature.

4. *The deceitfulnesse of the heart appeareth, in that it is appropriated only to God to know it.* The Angels, those exact creatures, are not able to know what is in a mans heart, nor the devil

9.  
In that it is  
appropriated  
only to God  
to know it.



divels any further then by conjectures, or so far as a man reveales himself. You see upon this question, *Who can know it?* is replied, *I the Lord search the hearts and try the reins;* so that the heart of a man is such a deep ocean, into the bottom whereof none can dive, but the all-seeing eye of God, to whom darknesse and light is all one. Is not the heart of a man then full of concavities and windings, when Angels and divels are not able to know what is in our breasts. Indeed the Prophets did sometimes know the hearts of others, as *Elisha* knew what was in *Giezeas* heart, but this was by Gods revelation, he made those thoughts known to the Prophet. Hence we prove Christ to be true God, because he knew what was in mens hearts, yea he did see what was in their hearts, that is more then to know, for I may know another mans thoughts, if he reveales them to me, but I cannot see them in their hearts, yet Christ saw what was in their hearts. Hence the Apostle saith, *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts,* 1 Joh. 3. He knows far more evil by us then we do our selves. If we then can discern so many errors, so much filthinesse, what doth the Lord know by us! This made the Apostle say, *though he knew nothing by himself, yet was he not thereby justified, for it is the Lord that judgeth,* 1 Cor. 4. 4. Oh then remember this, that God knows more by thee then thou thy self doest, and if yet thou canst perceive so much that makes thee abominable in thy own eyes and a very beast, how much more doth God know this by thee!

5. *This guile of the heart is notably manifested in this, That even a regenerate and a godly man, who is sanctified by Gods Spirit, that hath truth in the inward parts, yet he hath much of this hypocrisie and deceitfulnesse abiding in him. That rust then must needs cleave close, which such filing doth not get off. That drosse then must needs adhere, which this fire of burning will not consume. That this deceitfulnesse is still adhering see it in David, though a man after Gods heart: With what hypocrisie did he contrive his adultery with Bathsheba, and the murder of Uriah? how many subtle projects had he to hide and cover his sinne? Now that the hypocrisie of his heart carried him to all this, appeareth by Psal. 51. Thou desirest truth*

10.

Godly men have much of this deceitfulnesse in them.

in



*in the inward parts.* Oh he feels what is the plague soar, what was the occasion of all his misery, the want of truth in the inward parts: See then by this example, what deceitfulnesse may be even in a godly man: and although *Nathanael* hath the greatest commendation that can be given, *a true Israelite in whom was no guile*, yet that is not to be understood absolutely, as if no hypocrisie at all were in his heart, but comparatively in respect of others; as even among godly men, some have more plainnesse and sincerity of heart then others. The consideration of this unknown deceitfull temper of heart, made *David* cry out, *Clenſe me from my ſecret ſins*, *Pſal. 19.* ſuch as I have never yet discovered, ſuch as I have not taken notice of, Lord what I do not know of, what I am not convinced of, do thou pardon.

II.  
God leaves  
men in tem-  
ptations that  
they may know  
experimental-  
ly what is in  
them.

6. *That the heart is full of guile and unknown to a mans ſelf,* appeareth in that God many times leaveth men unto temptations, and puts them upon trials, that ſo they may have an experimental knowledge of themſelves. Thus God tempted *Abraham*, and it was ſurely that *Abraham* might by the exerciſe of grace be more made known to himſelf; of *Hezekiah*, it's ſaid, God left him in that proud paſſage, of ſhewing all his Treasures to the *Babylonish Embaſſadours* to try what was in his heart, *2 Chron. 32. 31.* That *Hezekiah* might ſee there was that pride, that vanity, that ambition, that he would not think poſſible in him: Thus when God let a falſe Prophet come among the *Israelites*, and the things that he told come to paſſe, *I the Lord do it to try you*, ſaith God, *Deut. 13. 1.* Oh we ſee that were there not ſuch perſecutions, ſuch heresies, ſuch ſcandals in the Church of God, many would never know themſelves. *There muſt be heresies that thoſe who are approved and ſound, may be made manifeſt*, *1 Cor. 11.* and certainly it is good for a Chriſtian to conſider whether all Gods Providences in his Church be not tempting Providences to ſee what is in thy heart: whether it was love to God, or carnall reſpects have carried thee on. The ſhaking windes diſcover the root of the tree; The boiling of the water diſcovers what is in the veſſell: Hot and buſie times, or times of liberty and ſuffrance make men known to themſelves and their corruptions, which otherwiſe would not have been.

7. The

7. The hearts deceitfulnesse is most plainly discovered in this particular, That a man when he is under the occasion and temptation of a sinne, will commit it, though before he would have abhorred it, and thought, though all the world should be given to him, he durst not do it. This is a remarkable particular, especially to take us off from those high pinacies and lofty presumptions we are apt to fix upon. Oh if we ever be such, or do such or fall into such miscarriages, they abhorre it. Oh vain man, little dost thou know the deceitfulnesse of the heart. This made Solomon say, *Blessed is the man that feareth alwayes*, Pro. 28. 14. If Solomon himself had taken this counsell, if he had feared alwayes, in the midst of that abundance and prosperity he had, it had never occasioned that great dispute, Whether he was saved or damned? Remember that instance of *Hazael*, upon whom the Prophet looked so stedfastly that at last he wept; and being asked by *Hazael*, why he did so: reply was made, because he should have power, and he would be so cruell, that he should rip up the very women with childe; *Is thy servant a dog*, said *Hazael*, that he should do thus? 2 King. 8. 13. He defied the fact with great abomination, and yet afterwards he did it, here was a deceitfull heart. But no marvell to see this in *Hazael*: Even in *Peter* a godly man, and very zealous for Christ, what an instance have ye of the hearts deceit! Christ told him he should deny him: he answered, *Though all men should forsake him, yet he would not*, Mat. 26. 34. but you see when the temptation came, he did not only deny him, but did swear and curse that he knew not the man: such is the guile of our hearts, that they would betray Christ every day, should not the Lord keep truth and uprightnesse in the inward parts: Hence are those petitions to God, that he would strengthen, settle and confirm us, 1 Pet. 5. 10. Hence also are those promises from God, That he will put his fear in our hearts, that we shall never depart from him, Jer. 32. 40. for without this, the heart will fly back like a deceitfull bow. How often are the *Israelites* in times of temptation, said to humble themselves, to cry out of their sinnes, and yet their heart was not stedfast within them. And this brings in the eighth Sign of the deceitfulnesse of mans heart,

12.

It appears in this, that a man under a temptation will commit that sin which before he abhorred & thought he could never be drawn in to it.

13.  
And that under Gods judgements a man will cry to God, &c.. but as soon as the rod is removed their hypocrisie appears.

8. That under Gods judgements, under heavy pressures and miseries, then it cries out to God, then it will crie sinne no longer; then God is righteous and they have sinned; but no sooner is the rod off the back, but their hypocrisie doth appear. This was the great deceitfulnesse in the Israelites, for which God doth so often complain: This made one of the Ancients compare them to Grasshoppers, that leap up towards Heaven, and then suddenly fall down to the ground. The Prophet said *their righteousness was like the morning dew*, which though it fall in abundance, yet immediatly vanisheth; so then here is a palpable discovery of the hearts deceitfulnesse, that under dangers, in time of Gods judgements, then they seem to be much affected; then they cry out, the waters of Gods wrath overwhelme them; but like the mill, when the waters are diverted or dried up, then they move not at all. Pharaoh and Ahab humble themselves and say they have sinned, but God is righteous, while the scourge was on them, but afterwards they return to their own temper; Even as the water which is radically cold, though it be heated, yet if taken from the fire goes to its naturall coldnesse, yea as Aristotle saith, it's colder then ever it was: Thus many people in mortall diseases, when there seems to be the approaches of death; then they cry out, oh pray for them, oh comfort them; then they will confesse and bewaile such foul sins they have committed; but when recovered and the fear of death is over, then they return to their former wickednesse with greater delight. Oh then that men were apprehensive of this, that they would cry out, Oh where are those resolutions, those vows that were upon me, in such agonies, in such streights! oh what were my thoughts and purposes then! but this deceitfulnesse of heart undoeth me.

14.  
In that lawfull comforts and enjoyments leade the heart away from God, contrary to their appointed use.

The ninth discovery of the hearts deceitfulnesse, is in a passive sense, thus: That all those lawfull comforts and objects which God hath appointed to be instruments of his glory and honour, and of our exercise in godlinesse, do tempt the heart aside and leade it away from God; so that riches, honours, pleasures, all the comforts in the world, do incite and seduce the heart from God. The heart is like tinder, that is ready to take every spark of fire that falls upon it: thus the Scripture calls it, *The decevableness of riches*,  
Matth. 13.



*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of mans heart.*

19

*Matth. 13.* Why? because the heart is so corrupt, that the profit of them doth immediatly allure, and so the deceivablenesse of honours, of pleasures. Were not the heart of a man thus corrupt, nothing in the world could corrupt it. Therefore the Apostle *James cap. 1.* makes every man to be *inticed and led aside by the lust in his own heart.* Inticed, that is, as the bird is deceived by the bait, and sees not the net. Yea the Apostle makes not the devil to be the cause of our sinne, much lesse God, were it not that the lusts of a mans own heart do first deceive; so that the devil himself could not deceive thee, nor all alluring objects, but that thy own heart betrayeth thee: Even as in some invincible strong holds, the enemy could never surprize them, did not some treacherous persons within discover the weaknesse thereof.

Lastly, *This deceitfulnesse of heart is seen, in an active sense, to deceive others.* First, *Even God himself,* it would deceive if possible by all that mock religion, and mock devotion it hath; by all those specious and fair pretences it hath. *Be not deceived,* saith the Apostle, *God is not mocked,* Gal. 6. 7. Men through hypocrisie and fair pretences do what lyes in them to mock and even deceive God himself. *And then in respect of others,* the deceitfulnesse of the heart appeareth, in all that falshood, lying, dissimulation of love, and respect, and intended good, when nothing but venome and malice is in the heart. *David makes a sad complaint,* Psal. 15. *Help Lord for the good and godly man perisheth, there is no truth among men.* The best is an hypocrite, said the Prophet *Esay*; and another Prophet, *Keep thy secrets from the very wife in thy bosome*: so that if you look only to converse amongst men, such are the lyes, equivocations, cosenings and over-reachings, that we may say, Truth is banished the world, and uprightness hath left the earth.

Use of Instruction, *That one main end of the Word of God, and preaching, is to discover this deceitfull heart.* Its to make us know our selves; compared therefore to a glasse, that will shew a deformed man all his unlovelinesse, and this is a glasse, not to the face but the heart; all those hidden and unknown lusts may there be brought to light. And the Ministry that is compared to light; as the Sun beams discover those many thou-

15.

The heart labours to deceive others,  
1. God.

2. Others.



sands of moates in the aire, which the darknesse concealed; thus the Ministry, in a powerfull and soul-saving way dispensed, will make thee see thy self to be that beast, that diuel, yea to have that dunghill, that hell in thy heart, thou didst not perceiue: look then for this benefit by preaching, not what may fit thy ear, may please thy fancy, but what may discover the dark corners of thy soul, what may bring glorious light into thy breast; that thou mayest cry out; O Lord, how long have I lived and did not know my self! I thought all was well, every thing was in quiet; but now I am like the *Syrians* Army, that being by the Prophet stricken blinde, and thought they were guided to their own camp, as soon as ever they had their eyes opened, they found themselves in the midst of the enemies camp: Thus thy eyes being opened, thou seest thy self to be in the power of all thy sins, all thy enemies and the curses of God.



### S E R M. III.

## *An instance of the Deceitfulnesse and Guile of the Heart, about Sinne.*

J E R E M. 17. 9.

*The heart is deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it!*

The deceit-  
fulnesse of the  
heart about sin

**W**E have given severall demonstrations of the deceitfulnesse of the Heart; now I shall instance in some two or three main particulars, wherein our Salvation is greatly concerned, and by them you may judge of the hearts deceitfulnesse about other things And the first instance I shall choose, will be about Sinne, the committing of it: Its a point well

well worth the insisting upon, to shew the unsearchable hypocrisie, and hidden deceitfulnesse that the heart of man hath about sinne; to do it, and yet so to carry it as if he did not sinne: If there could be a way found out to make sinne no sinne, or that sinne should not be damnable, this would greatly content him; but that being impossible, he labours what he can to delude his own heart, and to cover sin in his own soul while he commits sinne.

And first, *His deceitfulnesse about sinne doth appear, In that he will bribe his understanding to do what it can to justifie sinne,* to make it to be no sinne, but very lawfull and necessary. When God reproved *Jonah* for his sinfull frowardnesse, he replies, *Do I not well to be angry?* *Jonah. 4. 9.* He pleadeth for his vice as a virtue. Thus the *Israelites* had many arguments for their Idolatry, especially they plead the abundance and plenty they had, ever since they offered to the *Queen of Heaven*, but since they left that they were pursued with all calamities, *Jer. 44. 17, 18.* Oh the hypocrisie of the heart, that can finde out arguments to justifie sin, and make their transgressions duties. Thus the *Pharisees*, they plead against Christ, out of Scripture; and Christ informeth us, men should think they did God service *John 16. 2.* by killing the godly that believe in Christ. And *Paul* saith of himself once, that he thought he was bound to do what he did, viz. in persecuting the Saints, and compelling of them to blaspheme; and from hence comes that desperate wickedness and incurableness that followeth in the text, *Their eye is darke,* and then *how great is their darknes!* Their mindes and understandings are corrupted; they are become *Pharisees*, they please the affections, say what they say, deny what they deny. Thus the Sun is alwaies in an Eclipse, there is alwaies some interposition of one earthly advantage or other; and then the faculty being distempered, or made drunk, no marvell if it judge deceitfully. Oh then be very jealous of thy own heart, lest it plead for *Baal*, lest it argue for sin: and while thou couldst not imbrace sin as it did appear in its ugly colours, that putteth another dress upon it, and so makes it lovely. There is a wo to those that call evil good, *Isa. 5. 18.* and good evil, *light darknes, and darknes light.*

I.  
In bribing the understanding to justifie sin.

Such is the great deceitfulness of men in this matter, as if that opinion were true, That sin and vertue were no reality, but onely sin is sin if a man think it so, and vertue is vertue if a man apprehend it so, otherwise not. This quite destroyeth the Scripture, and pulleth up the very foundations of Religion. In Popery what a load of distinctions are there to maintain Image-worship, inso much that one of their own Authors saith (as *Anania* with him) that he must have *ingenium valde metaphysicum*, that can understand them all. Take heed therefore of thy heart, as the great Sophister, as the great Juggler, that will cast a mist before thy eyes, that will raise up a devil in *Samuels* clothes.

2.  
In that a man  
will venture  
upon the occa-  
sions of sin, yet  
resolve not to  
commit it.

2. *The deceitfulness of the heart will appear about sin, in that a man will venture upon the occasions and temptations of it; yet fully resolving not to commit the sin.* This is a great delusion of the heart: how many have fallen into the brink of the pit by coming so nigh it? To keep off from the temptation of sin is so great a matter, that we are taught constantly to pray against it; and wilt thou live against thy prayers so presumptuously? Thou prayest thou maiest not enter into the temptation of uncleanness, lasciviousness, drunkenness; and wilt thou go into the house and the company where it is? Oh wretched and deceived man! If thou art not strong enough to refuse going into the temptation, how, when thou art in the temptation, wilt thou be strong enough to refuse the sin it self? for which is more easily overcome? If the green twig will burn, then certainly the dry will. *David* beginneth his first verse of the first *Psalme*, with the blessedness of that man, that *shunneth the company of wicked men*, that will not have to do with them: For the Heathen said well, *How is he a good man that doth not hate bad men?* Therefore *Paul* exhorts us to have no fellowship with the workers of darkness, but rather reprove them, *Ephes. 5.* We read in the Jewish Law, *Exod. 22.* That if a man set an hedge on fire, and that burnt a field of Corn, he was to make restitution, though the fire was only in the hedge at first; and the reason was, because he was the occasion, it was hard to stop the rage of the fire afterwards. Do not then come near the occasions, the temptations: Those men that  
came



came neer the fiery furnace were burnt: *Austin* tels us of his Friend *Alipius*, that he would needs go to Stage-plays, but he resolved to shut his eyes at any unlawfull objects; but he could not abstain when he was in the temptation. Let not thy heart then deceive thee any more in this kinde, but keep from the occasion of sin as hell it self; Oh one day thou wilt curse the persons and the companions that inticed thee to wickednesse.

3. *The heart is deceitfull, in that before sin is committed, it presents only the pleasure, the profits, the delight of sin, and afterwards comes the hook, afterwards cometh the bitter Scorpions tail.* Thus *Jam. 1.* Every man is said to be led aside by his own lusts. There are 2. excellent Greek words, the first *δελεαζω* is couened, as the Bird that seeth only the wheat but not the lime, or the fish that seeth the bait but not the hook; As *Jael* to *Sisera*, Come in my Lord; and shewed him the dish of milk, but not the nails, that were to be fastened to his head: and the other is, *ἑξαλειψω* violently hurried away as one that hath not leisure to meditate on the danger; His heart is drawn aside from the thoughts of that hell and judgement which doth belong to every sin. Even as the devil at first inticed *Eve* both these waies, partly in shewing her the desireableness of the fruit of the Tree, and partly in perswading her she should not die though she did eat of it. Thus thy heart is a false treacherous heart to thee, it suggests only the pleasures and advantages of sin, but nothing of that torture and torment, the guilt will bring with it: *Judas* his heart did thus betray him as he did his Master, that told him of thirty peeces, and the profit thereby, but nothing of the anguish and horreur that would surprise him for betraying the innocent: O then consider this, you that are easily enticed to sin: The heart that now findes ease and delight, will finde gnawing worms and scorpions. Thus it hath done, and thus it will do, and therefore do not thou flatter thy self.

3. The heart before sinne be committed presents the profit and pleasure of sin and not the bitterness that follows it.

4 *The heart deceiveth it self about sin to think it self freed from iniquity, if it doth not act it self, though he counsell, take delight, encourage, or at least not gainsay or reprove others; and truly this is a notorious deceit of the heart, to excuse it self though*

4. In thinking himself free from guilt if he act not, though he abet the sinne.



though it have given way or do comply with others that do sinne: It's hard to say whether a mans own sins or other mens sinnes, to which he hath one way or other consented, will lie as the heaviest burthen upon men one day: Oh it will not be easie to say, Such a sin it was none of mine, it was not of my doing, for thou maist easily come to partake of other mens sinnes; which made a godly man pray, *Lord forgive me my other mens sins*: Thus *Pilate* deceived himself, for because the Jews importuned him to crucifie Christ, and nothing would satisfie but his blood, therefore he giveth way to his condemnation, and yet will wash his hands and say, *I am innocent from the blood of this man*. What deceit was this, how was he innocent when he would condemn the innocent. Therefore we reade *Nicodemus* though otherwise a fearfull man, yet he would not consent to Christs death, but opposed it in the whole councill: Thus thou that art a Master of a Family, if thou beest not a Swearer, a Drunkard, a prophane person thy self, thy heart deceiveth thee if thou knowest of such Servants in thy Family, and endeavourest either not their reformation, or exclusion out of thy Family. Again, there are many will not be drunk themselves, but they delight to make others, they take pleasure to see men overtaken, now this is so far from being innocent, that the Scripture makes the taking pleasure in those that do sin, worse then the committing sin it self, *Rom. 1.* Who do not only such sins, but take pleasure in them that do them. Yea, the Scripture goeth higher, for it makes a man partaker of other mens sins, if he hold his peace, and do not as prudence and charity, and zeal requireth, reprove them; *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse, but rather reprove them*: Reproof is often called by Divines Spirituall Alms: Now as in corporall alms God at the day of Judgement will punish for omissions; *I was hungry and ye filled me not; naked, and ye cloathed me not*; so it is with these spirituall Alms, Such were prophane and you reprov'd them not, such were ungodly and you instructed them not. As he said of temporall life, *Qui non dat vitam, aufert*; He that doth not preserve another mans life when he may, kils him, he is a murderer; so, he that doth not labour the spirituall life and salvation

*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of mans heart.*

63

variation of another man, when he may and ought, is a murderer of his soul. Oh then observe thy heart in this respect; doth it not deceive thee, while thou sayest, I am no such sinner, I offend not in such transgressions? yet thou art a partaker and accessary either mediately or immediately.

5. *The heart is deceitfull in sinne, when it will commit iniquity, pretending much good to come thereby.* This hath been a frequent deceit: Alas, they would not have done such and such unwarrantable things, but that there was a necessity, and much good will come thereby. There were such even in the Apostles time, that would make such inferences as these are; *Let us do evil that good may come*, Rom. 3. 8. But see what an heavy sentence the Apostle passeth upon such, *Whose damnation is just*. Its therefore a sad deceit of heart, for any man to encourage himself to do a wicked action, because its probable such good may come by it. Its directly against Scripture, no such divinity is to be owned. Hence *Austin* said, *A man might not tell a lye, though it were to save the whole world*: and indeed if good come by sinne, as sometimes there doth; all salvation came by Christ, who was crucified by the wickednesse of malicious men; and much good came to *Josephs* family, by his bretherens sinnes against him; therefore he told them, *you thought evil to me, but God turned it to good*: If, I say, good doth come sometimes by sinne, this is not the genuine and proper effect of evil, but the over-ruling power of God that makes it so; otherwise, as *ex falso nil nisi falsum sequitur*; so, *ex malo, nil nisi malum*; thy sinne of it self makes more sinne, *scelere scelus est tuendum*: and therefore when the godly have sometimes through infirmity done evil, expecting some good, as *Jacob* in telling a lye to get the blessing, the good they have obtained, hath been so clogged with miseries, that the sweetnesse of the mercy hath been taken away, and they have bitterly learnt this truth; Its best to wait Gods time, and go on in his way, then by hastening good to us through evil means: Observe then thy heart very diligently, such delusions do easily take place, if you live not wholly by Scripture commands.

5. In committing sin pretending much good to come thereby.

6. *The heart is deceitfull, in that if it doth not actually commit*

6.

In thinking it  
self very good  
if it commit  
not outward  
iniquities,  
though within  
it be never so  
unclean.

mit outward iniquity though the heart be a very dunghil, a cage of all unclean lusts, it thinketh it self very good. Herein the Pharisees did constantly delude themselves, none could charge them with such grosse sins as Publicans did commit: Hence it was that our Saviour did so often bid them look inward, Cleanse thine insides, *Within they were ravening Wolves, within they were rotten sepulchres*, howsoever painted without, and indeed this is one great difference between a true godly man and an Hypocrite. The godly man is much humbled for the sins of his heart. Though they never break out into action, yet if they arise and move in his heart, it doth trouble him exceedingly, as you see *Paul*, Rom. 7. making those sad out cries and complaints onely because of heart-motions inordinately stirring against the Law of God; But the hypocrite who doth all things to be seen of men, and doth not respect God, he is satisfied, if the outside be clean: Well then look to your hearts as that deceitfull root of all bitternesse, though no branches sprout out, what a serious and necessary exhortation doth *Solomon* give, *Prov. 4. 23. With all keepings or above all keepings keep thy heart*. As the heart is deceitfull above all things, so above all keepings and watchings we must watch to this, and why so? for out of it are the issues of life: sinfull eyes and wicked hands are because of a sinfull heart: Do not then blesse thy self because of a civil unblameable life, if the heart be full of proud, earthly, sinfull thoughts, Thou art an abominable and loathsome sinner before God: Hence *Mat. 5.* our Saviour preached strange but true doctrine, when he informed them of those traditionall errours and interpretations of the command that they had been brought up a long time in; as if it did only forbid outward sins; No, saith our Saviour there is heart-adultery and heart-murder: Let not therefore any man flatter himself with a fair outside, when the heart is inwardly filthy; he is no better then a Serpent, which hath a glittering outside, but inwardly full of poison.

7.  
In finding out  
many excuses  
about sin.

7. The heart is deceitful about sin, in that it's subtle and crafty to finde out many excuses about it. You would wonder at all the wiles and crafts of men in this respect. We had it from

Adam



Adam at first, thus to cover our nakednesse with leaves; Even in godly men here is too much of the crooked Serpent. In David, what colours, what excuses had he in the murder of Uriah! In Aaron when he joyned with the people in making that calf for idolatry; *I Put it into the fire, and it came out this calf*, saith he, *Exo 32.24*. As if he had not intended or thought of any such thing; Now this is not only a sin, but an aggravation of sinne: To seek out excuses, to labour for lurking holes to run into: We would wonder at the guile and hypocrisy of a mans heart, What a ready excuse it will have for every sin. As these coverings men will get for their nakedness.

1. *They will lay the blame off from themselves to others*: They would not have done so or so, but others perswaded them, or they were forced to it. Now this will not be any excuse with God, for there is never any necessity to sin, and sin is a greater evil then any temporall evil; Therefore our Saviour bids us *Fear God who can destroy soul and body, and not man who can kill the body only*, *Luk. 12.5*. Saul, he made this excuse for himself, why he sacrificed before Samuel came; *Oh the people would have it so*, and he could not gainsay it, but this lost him his kingdom, a little thing we would have thought, but *disobedience is a thing like witchcraft*; Adam at first laid the sin upon Eve, and Eve on the Serpent; so that it is an hereditary corruption in us all: If we have offended to lay the blame somewhere else if possibly: but now the godly man he judgeth himself most, he laith the heaviest load upon himself: *I and my Fathers house have sinned*, saith David, *but what have these Sheep done?* *2 Sam. 14.17*. Do not deceive your selves by putting it on others.

A second excuse is, *To put it off upon the devil*, to say, It's true such and such sinnes I have committed, but the devil he tempted me; but this is no excuse, partly because the devil cannot force thee to sin; it's thy own voluntary giving thy self up to him, and therefore that is no excuse though the devil do tempt thee. Hence we reade Peter charging Ananias with that lie against the holy Ghost, saith, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie*, *Act. 5.3*. Mark it, It was his sin to let Satan fill his heart, and therefore he is not excused but the more

blamed, and then the devils temptation will not excuse, because the originall of all is the lust of a mans own heart; I shall not dispute that practicall point, whether there be any sin committed that the devil doth not also tempt and suggest to? This is enough which the Apostle *James* tels as, *Jam. I.* Who makes lust within us to be the fountain of all evil, and sheweth by what degrees lust at last comes to bring forth; So then it's but a meer deceit of a mans heart to say, The devil tempted me, It was not I but the devil, for its a mans own lust that sets open the door first to let the devil in.

The third excuse men deceiue themselves with, is, *the litlenesse of the sin*: What need men be so severe, and keep such ado? Is it any but a little sin, a small matter? Thus men accustomed to petty oaths, and to tell officious, or merry lies, wanton and lascivious discourse: These kindes of petty sins, as men account them, they do greatly deceive themselves by; for if men would judge aright, they would account no sinne little: for although the Scripture make some sinnes as gnats, and other as camels, yet take the least sin absolutely, the guilt of it is greater then thou canst bear; If you ask why, the answer is ready, There is no little sin, because there is no little God: all sin is transgression of the Law, and the least blemish in the soul hath infinite evil in it, because it is against God of infinite majesty; and further no sin is to be accounted little, because the guilt can only be done away by Christs blood; Had Christ died to take away all sin but that one petty oath, that one lascivious word, all thy tears, thy sighs could never have satisfied; Though it be but a farthing, yet if left unpaid, it will keep thee in that dungeon of hell for ever.

Fourthly, *Men deceive themselves in sin by this excuse, that its universall, most do it*: Why should they be precise and singular to do contrary to all the world? This is an heavy temptation, and men think that may be easily pardoned, which is universally committed, but this will deceive you, for God doth expressly command, that we should not follow a multitude to doe evil; and therefore we reade of *Lot* though but one man, how unspotted he kept himself, vexing his own soul with seeing and bearing the wicked deeds of other men; yea, our Saviour makes it

it necessary for every man to be in a good manner singular;  
*If you love those that love you, What singular thing do ye?* Mat. 5.  
saith our Saviour; Hence the Apostle commands us not to be  
conformed to the fashion of the World, Rom. 12. 1. Universality  
then and multitude will not excuse: *Argumentum pessimi  
turba.*

Use of Exhortation, To stand upon our watch with fear  
and trembling. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulte-  
ries, murders, and all sins;* When you are forewarned thus by  
the holy Ghost, if you yet take no heed, your condemnation  
will be just, No wonder if so many millions of sins be daily  
committed, seeing so few watch and pray against their own  
hearts, *Libera me Domine a meipso*, and it's a good and necessary  
praier, O Lord save me and deliver me from my own self. How  
wilt thou in those eternall flames cry out and howl with in-  
dignation against thy own heart. Oh miserable deceived  
wretch, How are all my hopes and comforts gone! How is  
my Honey turned to gall and wormwood, Oh that I had had  
wisdom and understanding to prevent these torments; Thou  
that canst not abide hypocrisie and dissimulation in another,  
why is not that of thy own heart loathsome to thy own  
self.

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## S E R M. IV.

*Another Instance of the Hearts Deceitfulnesse in the matter of Repentance.*

J E R. 17. 9.

*The heart is deceitfull above all things, who can know it ?*

The deceitfulnesse of the heart about Repentance appears.

**T**He next considerable instance of the Hearts Deceitfulnesse I shall insist on, is about *Repentance for sin committed*: As the heart is full of guile and hypocrisie in the committing of sin, so it's no lesse subtle and crafty to delude it self about Repentance for it. Be therefore attentive and diligent, while this hypocrisie is detected, for its every mans case. None can say of this Point. as of many other, This is a good Lesson for such an one, it were well if such did attend to it, but this belongs to all. Every man that hath an heart, hath a deceitfull one; and in nothing more then about sin (as you heard) or a seeming Repentance about it. But as it's in mortall wounds a dangerous thing to close up the wound, and skin it over, as if all were well, when in the bottom there remaineth cankering and fretting humours, so its far more dangerous in the wounds of the soul, which are made by sin, to salve all up with a shew of Repentance, or a thing like Repentance, when it is not so indeed, and thereby the heart is as a notable Mountebank and Impostor in this matter; As in Popery they take the bones of some beasts, and commend them for rare effects, as if they were the relicks of

of some Saints; so doth the heart delude a man, as if about sin he had done all that was required about pardon: and therefore he may go boldly up and down, as if the sentence of condemnation were quite taken off: When alas all this is but a dream, and a meer delusion: Even as when a hungry man dreameth of such dainty feasts, as if he had been fully satisfying his appetite, but when awakened he is as hungry as before.

But come we to the particulars, And

First, *The hearts deceitfulnesse is evident. in that When sin is committed, it labours to put out the memory of it:* To take away the guilt and terroure of it by other recreations, pleasures, sports, merry company, that so he may not hear the dolefull howling of his sin within his conscience. Even as those people that sacrificed their children to *Molech*, it is said, *They caused Trumpets and Drums to make a loud noise:* that so the miserable screakings of their Children, and their sad Groans might not trouble them, and work melting bowels within them, such obstinacy and insensibleness doth a man labour to put himself into; hath he been overtaken with any sin? doth conscience begin to check him for it, away goeth he presently to this business, to that company, or sets upon clean contrary thoughts, that so there may not be so much as a beginning to repentance. Oh it's a sad thing when the heart of man feareth conviction and humiliation for sinne, as much as the dog doth the whip, or the malefactor doth a prison. The thoughts of hell and death are a burden to him, yet what is more ordinary? *Cain*, when he had committed that horrible murder on his brother, and begun to have a tormenting hell within him for it, To divert these sad thoughts he travelleth, and setteth himself to build Towns and Cities. Thus the Scripture speaketh of many prophane men, that say to the Almighty, Depart from them, and they will not the knowledge of the most high, *Joh 21. 14*. What a terrible instance of this deceitfulness have we in *Josephs* Brethren, When they had thrown him into an horrible pit, where nothing but death would follow. Immediately after this crime which should have made an earth-quake in the soul, the text saith, *They*

I.

In that when sin is committed it labours to put out the memory of it.

*sate*

sate down to eat bread, Genes. 27. 24. Oh where were their hearts? what had they done? Could they eat and drink when the cries of their brother *Joseph* should still be in their ears? But so our hearts will deceive us, and therefore the Prophet *Jeremiah* complains, that upon their wickedness, no man said *What have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. Oh there are few that after their ungodly actions God can see, as *Ephraim*, smiting her self upon the thigh, weeping and bewailing her self. Few with *Ezekiel* are sighing with great lamentations, but all their endeavour is to keep every thing quiet and peaceable within them. Oh how much better were it for thee to have fears like so many worms gnawing within thee, then to sin and to be so secure and senseless after it.

2.  
Or to judge  
that repen-  
tance which is  
not, As

I.  
A transient  
passion of  
sorrow.

But secondly, If the conscience cannot be put off so, sin lieth at the door; it accuseth, it condemneth, thou hast no peace, something must be done: Then how full are we of guile to delude our selves, as if we did repent when we indeed do not.

As first, We judge a sudden and transient passion of sorrow, with a short petition, *Lord forgive me, I am a great sinner, the Lord shew mercy to me, &c.* we think, I say, this is all that goeth to repentance. We make account, all is well as soon as we have said, *Lord forgive us*, we should not do so. No, this is no repentance; for howsoever in sinnes of daily infirmities, there is not required such a solemn repentance; yet in great sins that do grossly offend God, there ought to be a more fixed and purposed repentance. Indeed every sin, though the least, hath an infinite evil in it, in respect of God who is offended, and so requireth more grief then for any temporal evil, yea more sorrow then ever we can express, though our tears should be blood; yet according to the greatness of sin, so ought the greatness of sorrow to answer. Thus *David* in his sins of Adultery and Murder, manifested more trouble and grief of soul, then for daily infirmities. Thus *Peter* went out and wept bitterly for that apostasie of his, which posture he had not for every imperfection. So then you see for gross sins of the flesh, swearing, drunkenness, &c. you do but delude your selves, if you think such short and sudden expressions



ons of sorrow will be accepted : No the guilt of those finnes still is upon thee till thou betake thy self to a more solemn mourning, and renting of thy heart, mourning even as *Rachel*, and *refusing to be comforted* by any worldly comforts, till Gods favour be vouchsafed to thee. Oh thou canst take no delight in Houses, Orchards, Chests full of money, till such drunkenness, such uncleanness, such oaths be forgiven thee. *Zach. 12.* The repentance there promised is said to be *a spirit of mourning*, and that *as one weeps even for his onely beloved son.* Hence a repenting heart is called *a broken heart, a contrite heart*; that as the vessell beaten to dust hath no more of the former shape it had ; so such a man repenting, he is no more like what he was once : Oh the change upon him ! he would not do as he hath done for a world ! You see him no more in the company, in the temptations of sin. Oh be not then deceived, Though sin be not pardoned for the greatness of our sorrow, and they are not our tears, but Christs blood, that makes atonement ; yet God hath required such a broken grieved heart for sin, else there is no pardon obtained. Oh that God would set this home upon you. As *Agrippa* said, *Thou hast almost perswaded me to be a Christian* : so how many do almost repent, they do almost bewail their sins in a godly manner ! Its not a Cistern, but a Fountain that God looks for in thy mourning for sin.

Secondly, *If the heart be greatly and in a very high measure afflicted and troubled for sin, yet this lasts but for a season, it's not accompanied with a reformation and forsaking of sin* : So that to weep for sin, to shed many tears for sin, and yet to run into the same excess again, is but to wash a Blackmore. To roul a stone up hill, which immediatly fells back with great violence. *Pharaohs* heart thus deceived him, in the pressure of Gods judgements, he crieth out he hath sinned, and he will let the people go ; but no sooner is the storm over, but he returneth to his former obstinacy. Who would think the heart of a man could be fast and loose thus, off and on ? But deceitfulness is the ground of this multiformity. *Saul* you have also in some relenting and melting fits, he justifieth *David*, and yet as the snake emptieth her poison outright to

F

suck

II.

Without reformation and forsaking of sinne.

*Of the deceitfulness and guile of Mans heart.*

suck it up afterward again; so did he; but why do we speak of particular persons, when the whole Nation of the Israelites, sometimes were mourning, fasting and crying because of their Idolatries, and within a little space, erecting, adorning, and bowing to their Idols? Now all this while there lieth a snake in the heart, here is nothing but hypocrisie: and yet how many are daily deceived in this matter. They have tears and sighs for their sin, but they do not depart from them: They fly not from them, as *Joseph* from his Mistress, never to be enticed by them. Oh pity your selves, this deceit is too universal. Whose heart doth not as the very stones do at the change of weather, stand with some dew upon them, have some relentings on them, especially under changes, from mercies to judgement, but yet there is the stone still in the bottom! *Cast away your transgressions*, saith the Prophet, *Ezek.* 20.7. that implieth with what an heartiness we should leave our sins, yea we should with loathing throw them away. *Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with Idols?* *Hos.* 14.8. Never think then, thou hast repented, when the same sins are still committed. Oh it's a sign that sorrow was not from the spirit of sanctification, which notes an antipathy, and an irreconcilable hatred to sin, but from some external motives, which ceasing, thy sorrow about sinne is also dried up.

III. *Thirdly, The heart is deceitfull in the work of repentance, In that if it do grieve, and reform the outward acts of sin, yet it doth it not thoroughly and totally.* They keep some degrees of their sin still, The fire is not quite put out; there are embers covered in the ashes, which will break out again. Happily they leave off the grossness, and notorious lusts of their former courses, but yet they are not wholly cleansed and washed. As the people of *Israel* under many heavy judgements, they would destroy their gross Idols, but the High-places were not taken away. A man parteth with his sins unwillingly, till he be inwardly sanctified, and therefore he departs by little and little, as the extremity is upon him, so he cometh off to yield more. You have a notable instance of this deceitfulness in *Pharaoh*, for at first he is very obstinate, he scorneth at the Name

As most it satisfieth it self with an outward and partiall reformation.

Name of God, which *Moses* mentioned, who commanded him to let *Israel* go. Well, when many sore judgements had been upon him, especially that swarm of Flies, this iron begins to be softened, and he sends for *Moses* and *Aaron*, and saith, he will let the people go, only they must not go farre away, *Exod. 8. 28.* something he will do but not all. In the next place he is so terrified under the judgement of the Locusts, that again he sends for *Moses* and *Aaron*, and he will let the people go, only the men must go, not the women and the children, *chap. 10. 11.* Here you see he cometh a little further. The next judgement is horrible Darkness, this causeth a further work, *chap. 10. 24.* for now he will give leave that the men and little ones shall go, only their Flocks and Herds they must stay. Still he will not come up to his whole duty, though he would fain do something. Then comes the last and worst judgement of all, The First-born in every family stricken dead, and that at midnight; which wrought such great terror on them all, that *Pharaoh* riseth up at midnight, and then will yield to all, They and their little ones, and their flocks shall go. You see by this instance what deceitfulness is in every mans heart, to do something by degrees, as the judgements of God do compel him: Oh this is nothing but a deluding of thy self! Thy heart is glued to sin, and Gods judgements they make some forcible division from it, and something thou dar'st not but do, thou canst not but do, only thou dost not voluntarily come off to do the whole Will of God.

Fourthly, *The heart deceiveth a man about repentance, When upon trouble for sin he thinketh to make God satisfaction by some voluntary way of worship, or strict penalties that he shall inflict upon himself.* When such outward chastisements are performed, then he thinks, here is repentance enough, and all is made up. Thus among the Pharisees, all that outward worship which they had appointed, was for to pacifie God, but Christ told them, it was a vain worship. Especially there is a notable place, *Col. 2. 21, 22, 23.* where the Apostle speaks of several commandments, *Touch not, taste not, handle not,* strict injunctions, which he saith had a shew of humility, in neglect-

IV.

The deceitfulness of the heart appears when a man thinks to make God amends by some voluntary way of service.



ing of the body and not satisfying the flesh. There was great austeritie and a penal afflicting of the body; but because by these they were drawn off from Christ, and looked upon these as that which would satisfie God, hereby they deceived themselves. And hence it is that the doctrine of repentance is so greatly obscured by Popish doctrines; making the chief part of it to lie in some extraordinary voluntary punishments undertaken for sin; so that faith in Christ, and mortification of sin in the heart is altogether suppressed. Now you need not wonder at such a doctrine, for its brought from this deceivable frame of our hearts. When we have sinned we think not of the Scripture, we do not look to what way God would have us to take; but as if we had to do with man, we think of some compensation presently: But alas, if those eternal burnings in hell be not enough to satisfie God (sure if they were, men at last would come out of hell) how weak and inconsiderable are those bodily afflictions thou laiest upon thy self? Not that the Scripture condemneth fasting and afflicting of our bodies: *Paul* did it lest he should be a reprobate, but he did it not in such a manner, and especially not upon such grounds and corrupt ends as they teach. When therefore thy heart smiteth thee for sinne, presently enquire out of Gods Word, what way is to be taken for pardon, how is repentance to be managed, what ingredients go to it. We no more of our selves know what it is to repent, or how we are to repent, then what or how we are to pray. Let this be well thought on.

## V.

And when it judgeth those fears and sorrows that rise only from consideration of Gods wrath to be godly sorrow.

Fifthly, *This heart of a man deceiveth it self about repentance, When it judgeth those tears and sorrow which arise onely from the consideration of Gods judgements, because of death or hell, are the true proper tears of godly sorrow, Whereas they differ as much as the puddle waters do from the pleasant streams. And this is the great instance of a mans heart-hypocrisie about humiliation for sin, therefore do ye the more observe it. It may be thy soul is in great heaviness, thou goest bowed down because of thy iniquities; yea thou criest out, thou roarest out, Oh my sins, my sins! and thou saiest, what is repentance if this be not repentance? Oh thou art greatly deceived, for if these*

these cryes and tears come only from the sense of judgements upon thee, or meerly for the fear of death and hell, and not because God is offended, not because sin in its own nature is loathsome and abominable: I tell thee, thy heart is deceitful in this trouble; those very tears must be washed, and that repentance be repented of. See instances in Scripture; did not *Judas* cry out, was not he inwardly tormented for what he had done? did not he break out into that dolefull confession, *I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood?* yet all this came meerly from horror and slavish fear of Gods wrath: He throweth away those thirty pieces; he knoweth not what to do: but all this while here is no Evangelical mourning because God is offended, and sin as sin was not troublesom to him, for then despair in Gods mercy, and diffidence in his love would likewise have been abhorred; so it was in *Cain*, he goeth trembling up and down, the guilt of sin doth accompany him, he crieth out, his sins are greater then he can bear; but all this comes from fear of punishment. I cannot let pass that pregnant example of the Israelites, *Hos. 7. 14.* where God saith, *They did not cry unto him when they howled on their beds for their wine and oyl.* They humbled themselves and cryed out exceedingly, while God took away those temporal mercies from them; but it was not unto God, because of sin, it was only for outward mercies; and therefore he cals it howling; an expression from beasts, who being kept from food, use to make such miserable howlings, being ready to be famished. Thus you see, its not presently weeping, crying and roaring out for sin, that presently argueth the heart repenting, but its because thy sensible mercies are taken away. Oh the heart is full of unsearchable hypocrisie in this respect, that it is hardly known, when its the evil of sin, or temporal evil that doth lie upon thy heart. Yet I must give some correctives to this physick: I do not say, That grief and sorrow for sin arising from this motive, because God doth chastice, is wholly unlawfull; or that all that repentance which is from hell and fear of death is altogether hypocriticall: No, it is lawfull for a man to be humbled for his sins because of these considerations, and they are inflicted by God upon us for this

very end ; but this must not be the only, or the principall motive, but the offence and displeasure of God ought to trouble thee more then all the outward evil in the world: As you see in *David*, though in many miseries and calamities, yet the *light of Gods countenance* he prized more then earthly felicity. Do not thou therefore wring this truth while blood comes, which is only for nourishing milk ; for many times the heart of a tender godly Christian, because it findes such motives as these, doth judge it self an hypocrite, conclude that it hath never yet truly repented, but this is to throw thy self into the pit. And you must know the heart is deceitfull, as well in bearing witness against thy self, as if there were not that good in thee which God hath wrought, as well as presumptuously to flatter thee, that thou hast repented, when thou hast not.

## VI.

When it puts a man upon doing duties toward God, with the neglect of duties toward man.

Lastly, For we cannot take up all the deceitfull particulars, herein *our hearts deceive us about repentance for sin, that we are willing to do those duties which belong to God, but then we fly off from those that belong to man.* This is especially seen in the sins of injustice and unrighteousness that we are guilty of: Have we wronged or defrauded others ? this we are willing to confess to God, this we can bewail in our prayers ; but to make such restitution and satisfaction as God requireth, because this is against thy profit, or it is matter of shame, that thou wilt never do. But what saith God to the Jews that fasted and afflicted their souls, Do justice and judgement, restore what is taken away, as if all their other duties were not to be regarded. So when there are jarres and controversies between neighbour and neighbour, they will pray, they will be careful to perform religious duties ; but to forgive one another, to be reconciled in Love, that they will never stoop unto, whereas there is no true repentance till these things be done.

Use of Admonition, If thy heart hath deceived thee to commit sin, Oh let it not deceive thee about repenting for it ! for this is more dangerous then the former. To sin doth not meerly damn, but not to repent, that immediatly destroyeth. To be diseased doth not presently kill, but to refuse and reject  
the



the remedy, that will certainly carry to the grave. First therefore, let not sin after the commission of it lye quietly in thy conscience; do not labour to put it out of thy minde, to wear out the remembrance of it. It's a deadly bit thou hast swallowed down, if that should lie like undigested meat upon the stomach, trouble thee and make thee sick, till the spiritual vomit of confession hath given the ease. And secondly, when it doth trouble thee take the right way for repentance. The Apostle, 2 Cor. 7. tels us of a godly sorrow and a worldly sorrow, the one brings death, the other life: and to be sure, sin is like the sea, it never leaveth roaring and foaming, till the winds from above cease to trouble it. So thy heart will never be still till God be still. *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia, Psal. 32.* David could have no rest in his bones till he truly repented, and then he had present ease.



S E R M. V.

*The third great instance of the Hearts Deceit, is in the matter of Religion in generall, and about Religious Duties in particular.*

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J E R E M. 17. 9.

*The heart is deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it!*

**W**E are come to the third and last Instance of the deceitfulnesse of mans heart, and that is in matter of Religion, and religious duties. *If so be a false balance be an abomination*

nation to God, and deceit in humane affairs betwixt man and man, be so great a sinne, condemned every where by the Scripture, how much more must this false balance in religious duties? and this deceit is then the more abominable, when it pretends to the greatest Religion: for if *Tully* said of fraud and injustice between man and man, that there was none more capitall and abominable then of those, who *cum maximè fallunt, id agunt ut boni viri esse videatur*: this holds much more in all our religious approaches to God; It must needs be a Belzebub sinne, or the chief of sinnes, to shew our hypocrisie and guile in the matters of God, Take we heed therefore, that in all our religion, there be not such an hand-writing as was against *Belshazzar*, *Thou art weighed in the balance and numbred, thou art found too light.*

We shall first speak of the hearts deceitfulnesse in religion in the generall, and then of religious duties.

The hearts deceitfulnesse in worship and Religion in the generall appears.

I.

In its proneness to invent a worship and delight therein

In the generall, 1. *Herein our hearts deceive us, that we are prone to appoint a worship of our own head, to worship God with, and therein exceedingly to delight and applaud our selves.* Even as little children come to make babies to play with, so have men alwayes in the Church of God delighted to make Images, or some sensible representations thereby to adore God. But as *Cæsar* when he saw Women playing with their Birds and Cats, asked if they had no children? so those that have been taken up with an outward sensible worship, may be asked, if they ever were acquainted with that inward spirituall and serious worship of the soul? That the heart of man is deceitfull herein, appeareth, in that from the beginning of the world, men have alwayes delighted to take their own wayes, and to go upon their own thoughts in Gods worship, and not strictly binding themselves to Gods command. In the old Testament, how often are they blamed for this, that they went after the imaginations of their own hearts? That they went after the way which they themselves did choose? And how often doth God even in one Chapter, *Dent. 4.* bid them take heed to themselves, that they did not corrupt the worship of God? And that command, not to add or take from Gods word, is four times repeated in the Scripture. And why is all this, but because the

the heart of man is so full of guile, and very ready to make subtle inventions, and specious pretences in the worship of God? In the new Testament also, the Pharisees had greatly corrupted the pure streams, by throwing earth into them, as the Philistims did to *Isaaks* well, *Luk 16* how severely doth Christ reprove this? *Ye are they that justify yourselves*, viz. because of their superstitious invented worship, but God knows the hearts, mark that! They did not search or know the grounds and motions of their hearts in all this, but God did: and see what a forcible reason is given, for *that which is highly esteemed of amongst men, is servitus, an abomination of desolation*, as it were, viz. That way of worship, that external manner of serving God which they had brought in, was abominable before God. And in the after-ages of the Church, especially when men forsook Scripture, and appointed such means to worship God by as they thought fit: Then was such a famine on the Church (as I may allude) that an Asses head was sold for much money, I mean, any worship that a silly Monk or Friar should appoint, was highly esteemed: Do not then in matter of Religion let your heart deceive you; Every man hath heresie and superstition in his heart as well as other sins; oh that this were attended unto, then we should be a people contented with Scripture-institutions; commanded worship should be our bounds, and for want of this, we worship God in vain, and while we think we honour him, we provoke him.

2. *The heart is deceitfull, in making a politicall Religion, suitable to those carnall ends and aims that a man hath.* What is more ordinary then this, to be no further religious then will consist with our temporall accommodations. How far is that from the nature of the new creature *Paul* speaks of, *2 Cor. 5. 16. We know no man, no not Christ himself after the flesh.* To regard Christ and Christianity, for fleshly advantages and worldly ends, is to make the highest things servants to the meanest: To make the end serve the means; to make servants ride and Princes go on foot, it is to pervert all order, and set a dunghill where the Sun should be. But oh the abominable treachery and guile of heart in this respect: to make God and the

2. And to make a politicall Religion.



*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

things of God, instrumentall to bring about our earthly ends: Thus whereas man was made for God, he makes God for man; and whereas *Austin* said, we may *uti* onely all the good things in the world (use them) and *frui*, (enjoy God;) these use God and enjoy earthly things. The Scripture giveth severall instances of this guile: The *Sichemites* they would be circumcised, and undertake that religious service only upon carnall ends, that their Prince might have *Dinah* to wife, and they make advantage of the *Israelites*, what an horrible profanation of religion is this, to make the seale of the righteousnesse of faith, a politick designe to accomplish their worldly ends? *Jeroboam* herein also had a very deceitfull heart, that his people might not go up to *Jerusalem*, and thereby return to that Kingdom from which they were divided, *he sets up golden Calves* to please the peoples fancies, and to detain them with delight in that worship. *Herod* also, when he had a malicious intent to kill Christ, carried it fair, as if he had a desire to worship him: Thus you see, what horrible falshood and deceit may be in mens hearts, in matter of Religion, and yet the end be only carnall and earthly: This is to make the foot after the shooe, and not the shooe after the foot.

3.  
And those  
motions which  
arise from it  
self to be the  
workings of  
the Spirit of  
God.

3. *The heart is deceitfull in making those motions and delusions which arise from its self, to be the workings and motions of Gods Spirit:* So that by one of these deceitfull wayes, the devil hath alwayes infected the Church. Either mans innovations or imaginations have been taken for worship, or the motions and delusions of mens private spirits, have been taken for the inspirations of Gods Spirit: and truly, this may be so easie a deceit, that unles men have *their senses exercised to discern between good and evil*, and keep close to the word, they will be deceived. Hence is that command, *1 Job. 3. To try the spirits:* We must not beleve other mens assertions, or our own opinions, though thought to be of the Spirit of God, but we must try them by the Word; for as it was no dishonour to Christ upon the earth, when his hearers searched into the Scriptures, whether he spake consonantly or no: so its no dishonour to the Spirit of God, to try the pretences of it, by the Word, especially we being commanded thereto. Christ himself

himself said, *there should be false Christs*, and so there will be false and lying spirits in the Church of God. Now the Spirit of God, is a publike Spirit, as I may so say; that is, it breatheth and works by a publike and known organon or instrument; we are to expect the Spirit in and through the Word, as healing was only to be looked for in the poole of *Bethesda*, only there and not in other waters did the Angel descend; so its here, in the Scripture, and only through that, doth the Spirit of God communicate light and heat. Oh therefore take heed of delusions in this kinde, it may be thy own Spirit, or Satan, that works in thee, when thou thinkest its the holy Spirit. Practicall Divines give many differences, how we shall discern our own motions and delusions from the Spirits holy inspirations; but that which is the chiefeft of all, is to examine the consonancy of it, and the warrantablenesse of it by the Word: There are two sorts of men speak contemptibly of the Scripture, the Papists because of their Traditions, and Enthusiasts because of pretended revelations; whereas if men were more sensible of this hearts deceitfulnesse, they would be more humble, and modest, and depending on the Scripture. Take heed of the subtle deceits of thy heart in this particular. Thus for Religion in the generall:

Then for Religious Duties. The heart is full of guile; as

First, *To put them off and delay, to pretend one necessity or other, one businesse or other, or to take a better time, or when their hearts are in a more heavenly frame.* These and a thousand such dilatory excuses the heart hath, to put off those holy duties God calls them unto. Thus in the building of the Temple, which was a speciall service unto God, how many voluntary delayes did they make? It was not time yet they said, *Hag. 1.2.* but the Prophets awakened them: *Is it time to build your own houses, and to let Gods house lye waste?* they had time for every thing but that. Thus you may observe your hearts deceiving of you; You have no time for family-prayer, or private prayer morning and evening: Have you not time for the world? you are sure to neglect no worldly occasions, neither wouldst thou heavenly opportunities, but that thy heart deceiveth thee. Its a great stratagem in Military affairs, to put

The hearts  
deceitfulnesse  
in Religious  
Duties, is seen

I.

In putting  
them off, &c.

*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

the enemy to diversions; and thus the heart when its importuned to holy duties, then it suggests other businesses, other occasions, and so by this means the prize put into our hands is lost: If men did practically observe their hearts, they would finde greater hypocrisie herein. How often are they seduced as the Levite was, to stay a little and a little, to their inevitable ruine!

2.  
Or performing them with corrupt aims.

2. *In religious Duties, if our hearts by no subtile pretence can put them off, then there are corrupt and self-seeking aimes which the heart is full of.* Oh in nothing is mans heart more deceitfull, then in his aimes and ends; carrying it as if it were Gods glory and Gods honour they only propounded, when its only Self still in all that they doe: The duty may be an high spirituall duty, when the end is a low, vile, carnall end. Now while I am on this Point, I am in the very bowels of the hearts deceitfulnesse: *Je-hu*s heart did notoriously deceive him, he carrieth it as if he were a great reformer, a destroyer of *Ahab*s idolatry; and therefore saith he, *Come and see my zeal*, 2 King. 10, 18. *Is thy heart right as mine is?* yet in all these great and wonderfull works that he did, so that nothing was able to stand before him; yet the core of all this glorious fruit was rotten, he was a painted sepulchre; It was not God nor his will he lookt at, but his own temporall advancement: and therefore *Hof.* 1. 4. God threatens to punish him for all that he had done; for though he had done all that was in Gods heart, yet he was not a man after Gods heart in doing of it. The Pharisees are also a pregnant instance; how devout in religion, how zealous for fasting, for prayer, for the Sabbath? but what was the root of all this religion? ambition, a desire to be seen and applauded of men. Oh then see to your heart in this matter: Thou thinkest all is well, God may not only see leaves, but fruit on thee; but which spoils all, those worms of vain-glory have spoiled thy chiefest duties; this is that sweet poison which destroyeth insensibly.

3.  
Or else to spoile all by pride and self-confidence af-

3. *If the guile of the heart cannot hinder thee from doing religious duties, and that from pure grounds; then it labours to spoile all by pride and self-confidence after the duties are performed.* When the Disciples had healed the sick, and cast out devils,



devils, see what pride tickled their hearts when they came boasting to our Saviour of it : But our Saviour corrects them, *Luk. 10. 10. Rejoyce not in this, that devils are subject unto you, but that your Names are Written in Heaven :* while they cast the devil out of mens bodies, diabolish pride entred into their own souls : Thus thy heart doth often deceive thee ; Hast thou preached, hast thou prayed, with much enlargement, with great assistance ; how doth the heart begin to please and tickle us, Oh this is excellent, this is more then others can do ? No wonder then if we are so often exhorted to watch and keep our hearts, seeing there are such secret subtle wayes of destroying us ; thou maist have sailed prosperously through the wide ocean, in the midst of tempests and waves, and yet suffer shipwrack in the very haven.

ter the duty is performed.

4. *The heart deceiveth us about religious duties, in thinking all is well so that they be done, though not in that fervent, lively and effectually manner which God requireth.* No sacrifice could be without fire, neither is any duty of religion well pleasing to God, which comes not from fire in the heart : *Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, Rom. 12. boiling over :* and Christ said, *The zeal of Gods house had consumed him.* And *Rev. 2. How severely is the Church rebuked, not for grosse sinnes, but cold, negligent and decayed duties :* hence *the fervent prayer of a righteous man is said to prevail much, Jam. 5.* Prayer and all duties without zeal, are like a messenger without feet, a bird without wings ; but whose heart doth not grossly deceive him in this matter ? I have prayed, I have heard the Word to day, he saith ; but if asked, with what zeal, heavenly mindednesse, with what unity of affections, with what strength of grace ? his mouth is presently stopt. Now is not this lukewarmnesse in religion the great sinne of all people ? their hearts are not prepared, their souls fitted and enlarged for heavenly communion with God. Its good to observe, that the same word is used often in the Scripture for *deceitfully* and *negligently* : *Cursed be he (saith the Prophet) that doth the work of God deceitfully or negligently, Jer. 48. 10.* as some translate it, and so in many other places : and in a two-fold respect negligence in holy duties may be called deceit ; partly because God is here-

4. Also it appears in duties, in thinking all is well if they be done, though not with that fervour, &c. as God requires,

by defrauded of that honour and glory which is due to him. If thou wast to speak to a great Emperour, wouldst thou not diligently attend to what thou sayest, and to what carriage thou exprestest? how much more to the great and mighty God? for that thou hast defrauded God, as much as lyes in thee, in many duties. And then secondly, Negligence is deceit, because it depriveth a man of all that spirituall benefit and heavenly advantage, which may be had by duties: great and glorious things are promised to every duty performed in an holy manner; but negligence in them, loses all this spirituall benefit: They are so far from helping, that they endanger, and double sinne upon the soul.

5.  
And by ro-  
ving distra-  
ctions in duty.

5. *The heart of a man doth wonderfully deceive him, by raving distractions, and unseasonable thoughts that come in at those times:* Our hearts are upon other pleasing objects, while our bodies present themselves before God: Thus God complained of the Jews, that while they heard and offered sacrifice, *their hearts did run after covetousnesse*, Ezek. 33. 31. And thus some thought the Sabbath a burden, that so they might be selling and buying again, Amos 8. 5. How doth the heart please it self, and lull it self even asleep, and that while in these holy performances!

6.  
In taking en-  
largement of  
parts, intelle-  
ctuall gifts,  
or transient  
affections for  
the pure work-  
ings of Grace.

6. *About religious duties the heart doth often deceive it self, taking enlargements of parts, intellectuall gifts, or sudden transient affections, for the true and pure workings of grace.* And no wonder if a mans heart doth often deceive him in this respect, because things are so alike; and if so be Divines be so much perplexed to give a difference only doctrinally between gifts and graces, how much more difficult is it for the affectionate part to make any such distinction? They that prophesied, prayed, and wrought miracles in Christs name, thought every thing well, and therefore confidently called *Lord, Lord*, not doubting of acceptance; yet Christ giveth them a repulse. Thus the temporary believer, that heareth the word, and receiveth it with joy, wonderfully deceives his own heart; as if those heavenly affections David speaks of, were now burning in his breast. And certainly this lying deceit is very much in many mens hearts; how could such grievous scandals and apostasies be

be abroad in the world, but that men took religious parts and abilities for graces? they having the appearances, but not the substance, did soon vanish into nothing: Look then for better and more enduring things, then those of the minde only: There may be great gifts in thy prayer when there is no grace in it, and so it is a sacrifice without salt.

Lastly, *The guile of a mans heart about religious duties, is then most damnable, when they are made a blinde or covering for carnal and ungodly actions.* This hath been so common, though so horrid, that it gave occasion to that Proverb, *In Nomine Domini incipit omne malum*: Judas covetously desiring money, made a fair pretence; *Why was that ointment spent? it might have been sold and given to the poor.* Absolom intending that unnaturall treason against his father, pretends a vow upon him, which he must perform. The Pharisees that condemned Christ, pretended their great grief, because of the blasphemy they said he spoke: This is high hypocrisie, to make any thing of Religion, a cloak for impiety.

*Use of further Exhortation*; Let not this truth go from your mindes, ears and hearts, till as *Elishaes* body upon the dead Childe, it hath produced spirituall life and vigour in you: Let this word preached, be as the womans leaven hid in three pecks of meal, which leavened the whole; in thy understanding, will and affections, leavening the whole man: Oh whose heart doth not need this fire to purge out all his drosse. To be deceived in religious things, is as much above all worldly things, as the soul is above the body. Dost thou not hear the damned in hell, cry out in this particular, more then in any thing else? Oh we miserable deceived wretches! oh our hypocrisie! oh our fraudulent and cosening hearts! Thy heart hath deceived thee, the devil hath deceived, the world hath deceived thee, sin hath deceived thee: All these promised honny, but gave thee gall; All these held out a bait, but an hook was swallowed down.

7.  
And are most  
damnable  
when made a  
covering for  
ungodly a-  
ctions.





## S E R M. VI.

*The last great Instance of the Deceitfulness of the Heart, is on the right hand, and proper only to the Godly.*

J E R. 17. 9.

*The Heart is deceitfull above all things, &c.*

**T**Hree Instances you have heard of the Deceitfulness of Mans Heart, and we may say, those *tria*, are *omnia*, for all things may almost be reduced to them; they being like the *tria principia*, three Principles in Philosophy. Yet there remaineth one Instance more of the Hearts Deceitfulness, which is in the clean contrary way to the former, and that is a deceitfulness of heart on the right hand, which is not common to all men, as for the most part the former were, but only to the godly. They do in some things very much deceive themselves; now its Gods command that we should *not turn either to the right hand or left*, Deut. 17. 11. The left hand the godly are carefull to avoid, but many times, they decline too much on the right hand: Not that a man can be indeed too godly, or exceeding in holiness, but he may in using or heaping up more means as he thinks for godliness, then God hath appointed, seem to be so: *Solomon* hath a saying, *Be not just overmuch*, Eccles. 7. 16. Its not his intent to forbid the height and exactness of godliness, for we are commanded to love God, with all our heart, and minde, and strength, *Cum omni valde tuo*, as they translate it: here you see nothing will serve,

serve, but all of every thing a man hath, and *nihil est extratotum*, nothing is more then all: but *overmuch* righteonsnesse is either to go the summum jus, not observing that equity and condescension as in some cases is required: This Joseph avoided, when seeing Mary to be great with childe, he thought to put her away privately, *Mat. 2.* and because of this condescension, he is said to be righteous, that is, equitable; or else it is in a rigid and superstitious observation of things as essentiall to piety and justice, which indeed are not. The hearts then of the godly being full of deceit this way, I shall take notice of some particulars therein: and the rather, because this text is much pressed by Bellarmine and Papists, That no man can be assured when he is in the state of grace, because the heart is deceitfull: and truly the godly many times when they hear so much of the hypocrisie and guile of their heart, are ready to be beaten out of their confidence: first they begin to fear, then from fears come doubts, from doubts come direct and positive denials of any grace in them. But let not any godly hearer, while we preach of this guile of the heart, think we commend doubting of all that God hath done for them: do not run upon one rock while you seek to avoid another. When John Baptist was to prepare a way for Christ, he was not only to levell the mountains, but to raise up the valleyes; therefore on the right hand, thy heart may deceive thee thus:

I. When under this pretence of deceitfulnesse, thou doubtest of all in thee: and so whereas this text vouchsafeth good milk, thou wringest it till blood come; now this is impudent cosening, to cheat thee while thou art complaining of cheating: to deceive thee, while thou art complaining of the deceitfulnesse thereof. When our Saviour did in so many places discover how far men might go in religious duties, and have religious affections, yet have no root, be built on no sure foundation; this was not to make all his hearers be in a continuall doubt and agony, whether ever they were sound at heart or no; but to make way by diligent examination, for a good established assurance: As our Saviour at another time brought arguments by way of tryal to prove he was not the Messias, or the sonne of David; but when he argued thus, it

I.  
When under this pretence of deceitfulnesse thou doubtest of all in thee.

H

was

was only *tentative*, not to make them question it, but seeing the objection removed to be the further assured of it. Thus *Paul*, Heb 6. when he doth so severely speak those thundering words, concerning men enlightened, *and being partakers of the holy Ghost*, and yet revolting; he did it not that the truly godly should be upon perpetuall uncertainties, and daily torments of conscience whether they be so or no; for, saith he, *I hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speake*. Take heed then that thy heart deceive thee not in this point, even whilst thou hearest of the hypocrisie that is in all we do, that therefore thou question all; this is great weaknesse yea and unthankfulnesse, not to take notice of what God hath done for thee. It was great injudiciousnesse in the Academicks of old, that because every thing might be disputed, so probably, to hold nothing was wholly known; as in these daies, of those who are called Seekers, who because of Arguments tossed on all sides, think there is no true Church, or Ministry, or Ordinances any where in the world: and therefore as the Jews look for a Messias, so they for a Church to come that they may joyn unto. Thus, it is as great weaknesse in a godly man to question his repentance, his faith, his graces which God hath wrought in him, because the hypocrites heart tells him he hath such, when indeed he hath none, Even as if a man awake, should doubt whether he be awake or in a dreame, because men in a dreame are sometimes really perswaded they are doing such things, which indeed they do not. Why is it thou hast such complaints and groans in thee, if there be not spirituall life in thee? Whence are those hungings and thirstings in thee, but still from Gods grace in thee? Because a man may be deceived, it doth not follow, that in every thing he is deceived. A *Cretian* Poet, said *the Cretians were alwayes lyars*, Tit. 1. 12. yet that *Cretian* did not lye in that saying, for the Apostle saith, *that witness is true*. The heart therefore may be considered as the fountain of all rationall and animall actions, and so its not deceitfull; for we can tell, what we think, what we love, what we desire. 2. As a sanctified principle of supernaturall and spirituall actions, and so a man may perceive when he hath faith,



faith, as he said, *Lord I beleeve*, Mark. 9. 24. or when he loveth God, as *Peter* to Christ, *Thou knowest I love thee*, Joh. 21. 15. for this deceitfulnesse and guile is in its predominancy taken away. Though deceit be in a godly mans heart, yet it doth not reigne there. 3. As corrupted originally, and filled with sel-love and self-flattery; and thus it is alwayes either deceived, or deceiving of a man: So that the consideration of the heart of man, in these three respects, naturall, supernaturall and corrupted, may take away all doubts.

2. *Even the godly mans heart deceiveth him on the right hand, when he judgeth himself in the black temptations, and misty clouds that are upon his heart.* This is necessary for some godly persons to consider; Oh they can with sad tears and bitter sighs tell you, The heart is deceitfull; when you tell them God hath wrought great and good things in their souls, That they do repent, and do love God: But then they never think that the heart is also deceitfull in telling us, that we are not the children of God, we have not his Spirit, his gracious comforts do not belong to us; oh they never think their hearts may deceive them this way; whereas in the tempted soul, nothing is more ordinary. As thou must not bear false witness against thy neighbour, so neither against thy own self: Its not pride but thankfulness, to acknowledge that grace God hath wrought in thee. Oh then say, all that heavy judgement thou passest upon thy self, all those hard thoughts that are against thy own self come from a deceitfull heart: You dare not judge another man to be an hypocrite; you dare not have hard thoughts against others, why then against thy own self? Its said in Philosophy, That sense is not deceived about its proper object, that is, if it have a fit and proper medium; therefore because the water is not a disposed medium, the eye judgeth a straight stick crooked, and so it is here. Thy heart looks upon all thou hast or doest, through water, and therefore thy upright heart seemeth crooked.

And when a godly man judgeth himself when he is under temptations or distractions.

3. *The godly mans heart deceives him, by making false consequences, especially after this kinde of way.*

3. By making false consequences.

First, Because the heart perceiveth much sinne, and great filth; therefore it argueth, I may not lay hold upon Christ,

I.

H 2

I may

*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

I may not come neer the Promise, no more then a *beast near the Mount*: Thus *Peter* he said, *Lord depart from me for I am a sinner*: Here was a false consequence, a *non sequitur*; The more sinfull and miserable thou art, the greater need of Christ; Its fit a *Lazarus* should be laid before the rich mans gate: the *Wounded man of Jericho* was a fit object to have *cylin*to his wounds: Sinne humbled for and groaned under, should not drive from Christ but to Christ. See how Christ holdeth out that Scepter of grace, *Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give rest to your souls*, Mat. 11. There is no rest or ease for thy turtle dove, thy soul, till it come into this Ark. Oh then let not thy heart any more deceive thee, by such arguments as these, What? that such a sinner! so great an offender! doest thou think Christ will own such as thou art? Thou canst not abide thy self, and will Christ abide thee? But rather argue the clear contrary: If I were not a sinner there were no need of Christ: if God were not angry with me, there needed no Mediatour: therefore because I feel my self thus desperately sick, I will go to the Physition. Its good to observe, that the wayes which were made to the *City of refuge*, were made even and easie by speciall direction from God, that so the *manslayer when pursued*, might the more easily run thither: This *City of refuge* is Christ; and God hath so graciously provided, that no difficulties, no arguments, no doubts or scruples should be in the way for thee to be made partaker of him: away therefore with thy deceitfull heart, when thou findest it diverting of thee from Christ.

II.

Secondly, The heart of a godly man is deceitfull in this argument it makes; That they have no true grace in them, they do not love God, or delight in holy things, because they finde more sensible affection to worldly things then they do to God: The Scripture say they, requires that we should *love God with all our heart and strength*, yea that we should *love Christ better then father, or mother, or children*: Now saith the godly heart, I do not finde such love, I do not take such delight in approaching near to God, as in earthly comforts. Now here is also a deceit, for want of the knowledge of a necessary distinction: There is a twofold love; a sensible love, which consists in the  
sensitive

sensitive part, and is drawn out by sensible objects; and there is a rationall love, which they call *amor appreciatus*, whereby in our rationall part, we set an high esteem, and do judge such an object to be enjoyed before all, and we would lose all things rather than that: Now there is no godly man, though he may finde sensible love moving of him to sensible objects. but yet in his inward judgement and esteem, if he were put to this, to part with God or Christ, rather then those earthly mercies, he would choose to leave all, as *Moses* did the treasures in *Pharaohs* Court, rather then to have any pleasures of sinne for a season. Therefore it was not a good argument which *Joab* used to *David*, when he saw him so passionately bewailing the death of his sonne *Absolom*, and refusing all comfort: He bids him leave off mourning: and now I see thou lovest thy enemies better then thy friends; 2 Sam. 19. 6. so if all we had died so that *Absolom* had lived, thou wouldst not have cared. This was no good argument; for though *David* did passionately as a father weep for *Absolom*, yet in his judgement he thought it was better, if it must be, to have him destroyed, then to have his whole Army and Kingdom lost, and for that end did he take up arms against *Absolom*. So then, let not thy heart deceive thee, as if thou hast no grace, when because thou canst not finde such sensible affections as thou desirest, yet its good to labour and pray for these; as *David* said, not only his soul, but his flesh, his sensitive part did long after God: and commonly where that apprehensive love is, there it overflows all the inferior parts of the soul, even as the oyl on *Aarons* head descended downwards.

Thirdly, The heart of a godly man deceiveth it self in making this consequence: I do not feel my self in the state of grace, I have no assurance that I am sanctified and regenerated, I do not finde Gods favour upon me; yea I feel the clean contrary: therefore they conclude they are not in the state of grace, or in the love of God. This also is a frequent deceit tender hearts are fallen into; they argue from the appearance of things to the reality: Even as the Disciples thought Christ a Spirit, and so were greatly afraid. But (alas)

III.



the godly as soon as ever they are put into a state of grace, must know this, that there is a life of faith, and a life of sense; now according to sense we are many times, in our own feelings, a barren wildernesse, a very hell, as that good man cried out, *Gehenna sum, Domine, gehenna sum*; but things are not therefore so, because men feel so; *We walk by faith not by sense*, 2 Cor. 5. 7. Take a godly man, for his outward condition in the world, he is so opposed, so hated, meets with so much misery, that of all the men in the world, you would think he were not the man whom God loved; so saith the Apostle, *If we had hope only in this world, we were of all men most miserable*, 1 Cor. 15. And *we are as sheep appointed for the slaughter*. It was so in the old Testament, and the Apostle confirms it in the new: thus it is according to sense; but it is far otherwise according to faith. But the godly mans heart deceiveth him, he speaketh according to sense. *Zion hath said, the Lord hath forsaken me*, but it was not so, *Isa 49. 14*. And thus it is in our inward condition: The godly are many times in the dark; they are like *Paul* and his fellow passengers in the sea, that had been many daies in sad tempests, and had not seen the Sun; and they say, according to sense, *God hath forsaken me, I am wholly left*, I am become a firebrand of hell, there is no more hope for me. Oh pity me, all you that know me, for God hath filled me with bitterness; now all this while thy heart is deceiving thee: Thou judgest as thou feelest, whereas you should judge according to the principles of faith, as *Habakkuk* did, *Though the fig tree do not blossom, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the God of my salvation*, Hab. 3.

## IV.

Fourthly, This false consequence the heart of a godly man is deceived with, because it doth not finde that it can doe the things God requireth, with so full and perfect a heart as they desire, but they finde so much backwardnesse, dulnesse, listlessness, that they are so many lumps of earth; therefore they think they do nothing as they ought to do, not distinguishing between the truth of grace, and the perfection of it; or the presence of sinne, and dominion of it: In this particular the people of God do much delude themselves. Whereas the Promises are made to the truth of grace, not to the degrees of it: If there

there be true faith, true repentance, they may claim the Promise, though they have not so much grace as *Paul* or *David* had. A childe hath as truly mans nature in him as a dwarf: A drop of water is as truly water as an ocean, and the least Starre is of a celestially nature, though it be not the Sunne. We read of the incestuous person, that he was almost swallowed up 2 *Cor.* 2.7. with grief about his sinne: his heart deceived him, as if he were not to moderate his sorrow, and to keep it in an happy consistency with faith and joy in the holy Ghost.

Thus you have heard, how the heart of a man doth deceive him on the right hand, by making false consequences.

I proceed to a fourth Instance of the deceitfulnesse of a mans heart, and that is out of good affections and intentions, as we think, to passe by the rule we ought to walk by. No doubt, when *Peter* heard *Christ* speaking of his sufferings, and said, *Master save thy self*, he thought it was love and affection to *Christ*: but how severely did *Christ* reprove him, telling him, *he favoured not the things of God, but of man*, *Mat.* 16. 23. So when the *Samaritans* would not receive *Christ*, the Disciples presently would have fire called from Heaven to consume them; but our Saviour tells them, *They did not know what spirit they were of*, *Luk.* 9. 55. They thought it had been zeal and love to *Christ*, but it was indeed rashnesse and carnall revenge.

Lastly, *The heart of a man deceiveth him on the right hand, when he affects or expects such an high way of perfection in any Church, either for Doctrine, Discipline or conversation, that is above the Scripture-direction, or promise for any such thing.* For sometimes as a godly man is apt to conclude he hath no true grace in him, because he discerneth some failings; so he is ready to think, no Churches are true Churches wherein any defects are. Now the Apostle bids us, *not to be wise above that which is written*; not to affect higher wisdom then is revealed: In the Parable, when the tares were sown with the wheat, the servants asked their master, if they should go and pluck them up; Not so, saith the master, *lest ye pluck up the wheat also*, *Mat.* 13. 19. and concludes, that at the end of the world, and not till then, God will remove all scandals. Purity of Ordinances, and reformation of Churches, is alwayes to be prayed for and

4.

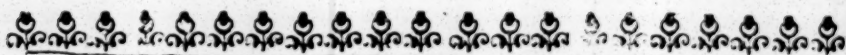
When out of good affections and intentions (as they think) they passe by the rule they ought to walk by.

5.

And when he affects or expects such perfection in any Church, that is above the Scripture-direction or promise.

and endeavoured: *I pray God you do no evil*, said *Paul*, viz. such evil as should infect the Church and deserve severe discipline; but to think to have a Church consisting of perfect members without sinne, as some have dreamed of, is to make a spirituall *Utopia*, as he did a civill one.

Use of Admonition to the godly, That their hearts do not deceive them on the right hand, as wicked mens do on the left. Indeed because the number of the godly are few, therefore the necessity of this doctrine is not of so generall an extent; but if this Sermon be a means to undeceive any godly man, to help him out of the depths and whirlpooles he is sunk into, its labour well spent: Thy heart deceived thee while thou wert a sinner, and now it doth while thou art a penitent: then it deceived thee in thy duty, now in thy comforts and thy way to them: Never consult with thy own heart, how to have peace, joy and assurance, *Tolle te a te, impedis te*, said *Austin* well. All the while thou hast rejected the promises, refused comfort, thou hast been a deceived man: Grace was in thy heart, Christ dwelled in thee, and thou didst not know it: Therefore let all sorts of men, the wicked and the godly, take heed of this deceitfull heart.



## S E R M. VII.

### *The wofull aggravations of the Deceitfulnesse of Mans Heart.*

J E R E M. 17. 9.

*The heart is deceitfull above all things, &c.*

WE have instanced in the eminent particulars, wherein the Deceitfulnesse of the Heart doth manifest it self, I now come to shew the sad aggravations of this; for it ought

not



not to seem a light thing unto you, while you hear this truth, yea you are to accompany the hearing of it with fear and trembling, with sadness and deep groans. *Jacob* did seriously expostulate with *Laban*, saying, *Why hast thou deceived me thus often in changing my wages?* but this was in an earthly matter only. Thou mayest cry out and say, Oh my wretched and sinfull heart, why hast thou deceived me, not this ten times, but this thousand of times, and that about my everlasting happiness. Its a rule that some give, *When a man hath once deceived you, never to trust that man again:* yet thy heart doth daily deceive thee, and notwithstanding this thou dost daily believe it. Well, let the aggravation of this dreadful condition in many particulars make thee bewail it, and if thou art once well instructed about it, thou wilt never be deceived about it. When thou hast warning given thee, and thou dost believe it, it must needs be unpardonable folly to trust it again: When *Paul* was informed that spies were laid in wait to kill him, he presently prevents their malicious design: Thus when thou art informed how deceitfull thy heart is, alwayes lying in wait to destroy thee, if thou hast any care or love to thy soul, thou wilt be diligent to prevent it. What was said of a certain people, that lay skulking up and down in secret places, it was *difficilius invenire, quàm vincere*, harder to finde them out, then to conquer them; so its here, Its harder to finde out the secret and subtle lusts of thy soul, then to mortifie them: get them out of their holes, as you do moles or wormes out of the ground, and then you may easily take them.

First, *Therefore this Deceitfulness is sadly to be aggravated, because it takes away all sense and suspicion of any such thing.* The deceitfull heart is accompanied with senselesnesse and stupidity: if there were any suspicion or fear, then it would not do so much hurt, but the heart being deceitfull, there is no holy fear or trembling, no jealousy at all. Experience in all mens hearts doth testifie this: Come to any man in his naturall estate, hath he any suspicion of himself; Doth he ever think, what if I be not yet in a right way? how if I blesse my soul when God abhorreth me? Doth not every man as *Agag*, de-  
lude his own soul, saying, *The worst is over:* He will not so  
I much

The heart is so deceitfull, that it takes away all sense and suspicion of any such thing.

much as begin to question any thing, Whether he doth truly repent? whether he hath a saving faith? whether his life be a Scripture-life? so that herein our deceitfulnesse is very destructive, because it takes away all sense and perceiving of any danger. Now as those Diseases are most dangerous which take away all sense and feeling, or which are like health, that the diseased man promiseth himself, he shall be well for all this; so the heart, though grossly polluted and obnoxious to Gods wrath, yet taking away any fear or suspicion of it, this doth the more certainly kill and destroy.

2.  
It puts a man  
into a self-flattery.

Secondly, *Its sad, because this deceitfulnesse doth not only thus deprive of all holy fear, which is the beginning of all wisdom, but it puts a man into a self-flattery, even into a contrary disposition thereunto; so that instead of trembling, its full of self-justification, of self-excuse; it applieth all comforts, all hopes to it self.* That as the devil in a great lye said, *all the glory and the Kingdoms of the World were his;* so they say, *All the glory and Promises do belong to them.* The Pharisees how strangely were they deceived in this particular, that they were *Abrahams seed*, Joh. 8. and that the Promises did belong unto them; therefore *John Baptist*, knowing the root of all their destruction did arise from such a deceitfull principle, he layed his axe to it, when he said, *Think not to say within your selves, We have Abraham to our father*, Mat. 3. 9. *Think not to say within your selves: Their hearts did often speak this: And thus (beloved) could we see into mens hearts, or hear what they speak, this would be the great talk within: Tush, what matter is it for what the Ministers of God threaten us with; they would trouble us and grieve us, they would cast us out of the quiet possession we have had a long time: but we will not be scared, we have good hearts, and we doubt not but to do as well as any of them all.* Oh herein is the bloody aggravation of our deceitfull hearts, That they bid us take our ease, eat, drink, and be quiet, when yet every night or day, our souls may be arrested for hell. The Church of *Laodicea* was thus deceived, when she said, *she was full, and rich, and lacked nothing: Alas, what a contrary sentence did God give? she was naked, and miserable, and wanted all things: Thus it is with thee; Thou sayest,*

sayest, My heart is good, I repent of my sinnes, I am reconciled to God, whenas God affirms the clean contrary.

Thirdly, *This aggravation is heavy, because hereby the heart is made incurable*: There is no possible way, in respect of humane power, to cure this disease; Hence it followeth, *And desperately wicked*: so this consideration should be *jaculum in corde*, a very sharp arrow darted in the heart: for what is more miserable, then to be incurably miserable? Now in two respects the hearts deceitfulnesse makes it desperately wicked:

3.  
And so is made  
thereby incurable.

First, *Because hereby the initiall and preparative work to conversion is wholly extinguished*; for in this doth the antecedent or initiall work of repentance lye; to dislike and abhor our former sinnes, to detest and loath our selves, to judge our selves with a severe indignation and revenge; now how can this be while the heart is possessed with deceitfull thoughts of its own goodnesse and happinesse: Hence the Scripture doth so frequently exhort them to *search and try their wayes, and so to turn unto God*: Thus the fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom, Prov. 17. Oh then wonder not to see men so far from Ephraims holy deportment, bewailing themselves saying, *What have they done?* while they are thus confident of all things to be well within them; *Timor facit consiliatio*, fear makes men prone to ask counsell, and to enquire, what is fit to be done. Hence the Psalmist prayeth, *Put them in fear* (O Lord) *that they may know themselves to be but men*, Psal. 9. 20. Thus mayest thou pray; Put me, O Lord, in an holy fear, and godly trembling, that I may know how great a sinner I have been, and wherein I have gone astray.

Secondly, The incurablenesse of it doth appear, because of the difficulty there is for the Ministry to come at it, and to search into all the dark corners of the heart; for although the word of God be a light, yet there are so many secret windings and dark holes in the soul, that the word doth not so easily reach it: Hence the Jews in the old Testament, and the Pharises in the new, were not cured, notwithstanding those powerfull and piercing Sermons which they constantly heard, because through the deceit and guile of their hearts they repelled all: they would not apply threatnings to themselves:



*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

Howsoever it was with others, yet still they justified themselves: Indeed *the Word of God* is said to be a *two-edged sword*, and to pierce through the *most inward and secret thoughts and intentions of the heart*, Heb. 4.11. Even as the Sacrifice was opened, and all the entrails were made manifest: Thus sometimes God blesseth the word, that it discovers a mans self to himself, it makes him know all the secret and hidden wickednesse of his heart, which he never was convinced of; but for the most part, therefore the word doth not profit, because it cannot reach to the heart. As those diseased parts can never be cured, which cannot have the medicine in its virtue come to them. If you ask them, Why do so many Sermons miscarry? why hath the word of God no better effect? all may be resolved to this, the hearts deceitfulnesse: If mens consciences were true to them, if their hearts did not delude them with many a lye, the soul could no longer withstand, but cry out: I am the finner you seek for, I am the transgressor, I cannot hide my self any longer.

4.  
This deceitfulnesse is aggravated in that it is of the heart,

Fourthly, This deceitfulnesse is heightened, in that it is the *heart, the whole of a man*: Howsoever sometimes the word *heart*, is put as distinct from the minde and soule, yet when it is alone, it signifieth all the parts, abilities and powers of the soul: so that heart here in the text, is as much as the understanding is deceitfull, the will is deceitfull, the affections are deceitfull, the conscience is deceitfull, a man hath not one faithfull friend in his heart. It was the saying of an Heathen, *He that would be good, must have either a faithfull friend, or a bitter enemy*. He will never know his faults, but by one of these two kinds; now thy heart is neither a true friend or a severe enemy, but a crafty flatterer, that sayeth and speaketh all things as thou wouldst have it. All the hope in a man, might be thought to be his conscience, that that is not deceitfull, for how often doth that accuse and condemn even against mans will? How often doth that tell the truth, and doth not spare thee? can this therefore be thought to be deceitfull? Yes; To the unclean, even his very conscience is polluted, *Tir. 1. 15.* for many mens consciences are bribed and taken off from their duty: These doggs will not bark, these spies are corrupted,

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corrupted and bring no true intelligence : It blesseth when it should condemn ; it excuseth when it should accuse : Besides how often is it erroneous, and being deceived it self, deceiveth the whole man ? Those that thought they did God good service in killing Christs Disciples, their consciences deceived them : *Paul* when he thought he was bound to do what he did in persecuting the Church of God, his conscience deceived him ; insomuch that this conscience, which we would think, was the only faculty left in man, that like *Jobs* Messenger had escaped, and brought the ill tydings of all that evil that had befallen us : Even this also is corrupted as well as the rest : our Counsellor, our Monitor, is become unfaithfull to us ; so then, how much is this deceitfulnesse to be bewailed, when it hath infected the very whole of a man, nothing doth escape this defilement. The Psalmist cried out, *Help Lord, for the faithfull man perished*, Psal. 12. Every one spake this to his neighbour : and thou mayest also cry out, *Help (Lord)* for all truth and faithfulness is perished from within me ; I have nothing in my heart or soul that speaks truth unto me.

Fifthly, *This deceitfulnesse may be aggravated from the object matter in which we are thus deceived, and that is in the matters of the greatest and highest concernment, even in things of eternity and everlasting happinesse.* Oh then be awakened, and come out thy self, for here thou art not deceived in matters of thy worldly and outward advantages, but about Heaven and salvation. In all humane converse, how carefull are men not to be deceived ; concerning their Evidences and settling of any estate ? how desirous to take advice : Now how inexcusable then will it be, to suffer that *Dalilah* within thy heart to deceive thee and betray thee in matters of eternall consequence ! Oh souls bowed down to the earth, and carelesse about all heavenly things ? Oh this will be no excuse at the day of judgement, to say, The world, or sinne, or thy own heart hath deceived thee, for God in his word hath given thee warning of this hypocrite in thy heart ; Do not then sit and hear these things as if they did not belong to thee. Thy heart it may be is deceiving thee at this very time, its flattering and

5.  
And that it is about matters of the greatest concernment.

*Of the deceitfulnesse and guile of Mans heart.*

deluding thee, telling thee its well, when its not well ; calling evil good, and good evil ; and truly were this in fading and dying things, it were no such great matter, but being in things that continue and abide forever, this should much trouble thee.

6. This deceit frustrates men of all their hopes.

Sixthly, *This deceitfulnesse is heavy, because it makes our confusion the greater, when we see our selves frustrated of all our hopes, and the good things we promised our selves in earthly comforts.* How was the Church confounded, when she said, *she looked for salvation, but behold destruction:* but greater horror and amazement will surprize thee, when thou shalt cry out, *I looked for Heaven, but behold hell ; I looked for happinesse, but behold eternall torments.* If thou hadst never hoped, or promised better things to thy self, thy confusion would not have been so great ; but for thee to live and die, speaking nothing but hopefull things to thy soul, and then be frustrated of all, this will cut to the very heart. As the foolish Virgins that hoped for immediate entrance into Heaven, and looked for the smiles of the bridegroom ; but finding no accessse for themselves, and that they were wholly shut out, this made great amazement. Who can expresse the inward wounds and indignation *Haman* had, who hearing *Ahasuerus* enquiring *what glory should be put upon him whom he should honour,* and *Haman* not doubting but he was the man, reckoneth up all the highest degrees of glory that could be ; but when he saw it was not himselfe but *Mordecai*, he was deceived in his expectation, this could not but be daggers and swords in his bowels ; oh then think what strong confusion will fall upon thee, when thou in thy life time, in thy sicknesse, in all thy fears and calamities hast judged thy self one whom God will honour, whom God would save, and at the last be cast out from his presence, as the man whom God abominates. Do not deceive thy self, this may be thy case, though for the present thou doest not beleieve it, or much regard it.

7. And hereby we are taken off from all spirituall watchfulnesse.

Seventhly, *This deceitfulnesse is the more to be aggravated, because hereby we are taken off from all spirituall watchfulnesse and diligence in our way to Heaven.* We see the Scripture doth very frequently enjoin this duty of watchfulnesse and praying,



as being encompassed with many enemies, as being in danger from within and from without; now the deceitfulnesse of the heart doth wholly neglect this duty, and these little thieves within, do open the door for the greater ones without: The devil, and the world, and sinne, do so easily deceive thee, because thy own heart doth deceive thee; thereupon there is no strict watch kept, there is no constant and daily praying, and attending against all temptations; and thou mayest say, If it were an enemy or an open adversary that did work my ruine, it might be better born, but its thou O friend, my heart that is alwayes with me, that liveth and moveth within me.

I shall conclude with an Use of Instruction, concerning these corollaries or main necessary particular points.

1. Is the Heart thus deceitfull, *Then how necessary is it to keep close to the Scripture which cannot lye or deceive us?* When in matters of Religion we go after our own hearts or our own imaginations, which the Scripture so often forbids; or when we believe our own spirits or other mens spirits, without the word, this is to follow an *ignis fatuus*. In Religion and Piety, it is a dangerous argument to say, Methinks this is piety, and me thinks this is fit worship, when we have not the Scripture command: There are no such lying and false books, as that of thy own heart is, and therefore wander not from the word, so neither believe affections, enlargements, or strong impressions upon thy spirit, though obtained by prayer, unlesse warranted by the word: This deceit is *dulce venenum*, sweet poyson, and many have greedily swallowed it down.

Use.

2. Is the heart deceitful? then beleeve not thy self in such reasonings as these are; If I had such power, if I had such authority, if I had such an estate, or so much wealth, I would do this or this: herein many do greatly erre, for when God many times gives them their hearts desire, they do no more good then others; they grow as proud and earthly as others, *magistratus virum indicat*. It was said of one Roman Emperor, *Dignus imperio*, in all mens judgements, *si non imperasset*; Thus thou thinkest before thou hast honour, wealth, thou wouldest be so righteous, so just, so holy, but when thou art raised up to such a pinnacle, thou throwest thy self headlong into such finnes

sinnes as others do. So men concerning their outward estate, they are apt to set bounds ; If they had so much, if they could obtain but to such an estate, they would desire no more ; whereas, alas their hearts deceive them ; for when they have so much, then still they desire more, and so addition doth not quench but increase the thirst.

3. Is the heart thus deceitful ? then wonder not to see men practise those sinnes which they condemn in another. Though the Apostle *Rom. 2. 1.* saith, *such a man is inexcusable, that condemneth another man and yet doth the same things.* He that teacheth another should not be wicked yet he be wicked himself ; so the cause of all this is evident, *viz.* the deceitfulnesse of a mans heart : Even as the eye doth see other things but it doth not see it self ; so the heart of a man condemneth the pride, worldlinesse, self-seeking in another, that it doth not behold in it self. So wonder not to see a man speak against those sins in the generall, which yet he in his particular will daily commit, for as long as men have these impostures within them, it cannot be otherwise.

Lastly, Is the heart deceitfull ? then we see great reason, why the Scripture doth so much command watchfulnesse, sobriety, mourning, fasting, prayer, and all such religious exercises, for all is too little seeing our hearts do easily seduce : If you be not alwayes on your watch-tower, if you do not constantly observe what things come in and go out of thy heart, it will be betrayed and thou know nothing.



## S E C T. II.

Of Uprightnesse of Heart, or the  
Heart without Guile.

## S E R M. VIII.

*Opening the Scripture words that hold  
forth Uprightnesse of Heart, and shew-  
ing which are the Characters of a Heart  
without Guile.*

## P S A L. 32. 2.

*Blessed is the man, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniqui-  
ty, and in whose spirit there is no Guile.*

**T**HE excellency of this Psalme is notified in the inscription, *Maschill*, which is as much as a Psalme to give instruction; and the two first verses seem to be a doctrine breathed out from the inward agonies and sad combats the Psalmist had in his soul, because of the guilt of sinne within him: Its a truth woven out of his own experience from his inward parts, as the Silk-worm spins her excellent materials from her own bowels.



In the words we have a description of Blessednesse, which is the chief end of man, and which all desire, though they wander from the way and mean to it. And in this consider first, The subject who are blessed : and secondly, The specification of the blessing. The subject described to be blessed, are not such whom the world doth account blessed ; for some say, Blessed are the Rich in this world ; some, Blessed are the Honoured in this world, others, Blessed are the Powerfull and Mighty in the world ; but none of these things are named by the Psalmist, he found by his own experience that all the Kingdoms and Honours in the world were nothing to the having sin pardoned : Oh no ; the troubled heart for sin, would give a world, if it were in his power, for the light of his Gods countenance ; so then you see what is blessednesse : and though man senselesse of the wrath of God, that never found the shakings of this foundation within through sinne, is not apt to be affected with this blessednesse, yet when once you come to be spiritually wounded, you will then cry out for this oyle to be powred into you. Now the subject described, is one that hath these two qualifications, which are the summe and epitome of all true Christianity ; *Justification* and *Sanctification* : Justification, is in those passages, which contain remission of sinne ; and *sanctification*, in that of my text, *in whose spirit there is no guile*.

Its not my intent to speak of the former, only transiently take notice of the nature of blessednesse described to be in remission of sinnes ; which is amplified by three emphaticall expressions : 1. *Whose sinne is forgiven* : In the Hebrew it is, which is lifted up ; and thereby is excellently shewed, That sinne lyeth like an heavy burden and a weighty load upon man, as one that is to be pressed to death : now forgiveness is an ease or a taking off this burden. 2. It saith, *whose sinne is covered* : That denoteth the loathsome and foul nature of sinne, how abominable, and provoking it is of the Lords eyes against our own souls. 3. *Whose iniquity is not imputed* : and that implieth sinne to be a great debt which we owe to God, and being not able to discharge it, God he doth graciously forgive it, and blot it out ; so that when thy sinnes are forgiven,

it is as if thou never hadst been a sinner, as if never any such iniquity had been found in thy hands: This is very comfortable to meditate on; for the true godly man is apt to think, Oh if I had never been such a sinner, if I had never defiled my soul by such abominations, I could then have rejoiced as well as others; think of this, When sinne is forgiven, it is as if it had never been committed by thee.

But I come to the second qualification, which containeth the inward reall property of those that are blessed, (as the other was externall adherent, justification being without us, though received by us,) and that is described in these words, *In whose spirit there is no guile*: He doth not say, in whose mouth, tongue or hands, but in whose spirit there is no guile. The spirit of a man doth signifie in the Scripture, the chief, sublime and most excellent parts of the soul; and he saith, in whose spirit there is no guile, because that is a generall to all sinne, as *uprightness* is to all graces: or else more particularly to his own guile, because as followes in the Psalme, He kept silence, would not confesse his sinnes, would not take the right way for pardon; and this made his heart like a very hell, this made the guilt of sinne burn like tormenting fire in his conscience, till at last he began to deal plainly and sincerely with God, in confessing his iniquity, and then his soul began to have peace and enjoy pardon.

Observ. That those only have blessednesse in pardon of their sinnes, whose spirits are without guile. Not that any man living can be wholly without some degree of this leaven in his heart, but we speak of the constant predominancy and settled power of it. David was blessed in the pardon of his sins, yet he had graduall and partiall guile or deceit in his soul; the greek word *dolos* from whence is the Latin *dolus*, comes from *dolere*, to hurt and diminish, because deceit usually doth so; and from this root also *dolor* doth come, because it wonderfully hurts and consumes the body, grief being rottennesse to the bones.

Now because its a rule that contraries do illustrate one another; let us take notice of those words that are opposite to this guilefull heart: and the first is, that of an innocent heart, commended to the godly by Christ, *be innocent*

Observ.

Guileless men the only pardoned and blessed men.

## Of Uprightnesse of Heart : Or

as Doves, Mat. 10. 16. Doves are far from all guile and craft; the greek word ἀνιδεσις, some make it to be from α privative and ιδεσις an horn, as much as without an horn, not to be offensive and malicious against others; but its better deriving it from α privative and μελε to mingle, as much as that which is without mixture, for this is an heart without guile, that doth not debase it self by mixture with any inferior thing to it, as gold is debased if it be mingled with brasse, or any other inferior mettall: and thus the soul is greatly defiled, when it doth inordinately love and delight in these things below.

Another word is Phil. 1. 10. εἰλικρίνεια, I pray God ye be sincere; εἰς are the sun-beams, and some make it an allusion to the Eagle, who doth try her spurious young ones by beholding the sun-beams; but that seemeth to be a fable: Others expresse it thus; that as by the sun-beams we discern those little moates in the ayr which before were not discerned, so its here, an heart without guile being enlightened by Gods Spirit, doth discover those hidden and secret corruptions which it never took any notice of before.

The last I shall instance in is ἀπλότης, simplicity or plainnesse of heart, when there are no folds as it were upon the soul, but all is made manifest.

Notes of a  
heart without  
guile.

I.

Godly plain-  
nesse and sim-  
plicity of spi-  
rit.

In the next place let us consider, what things are either constitutive of, or consequentiall unto this heart without guile.

And 1. It lyeth in a godly plainnesse and simplicity of spirit; not delighting in false coverings, and subtle excuses for sinne: This Adam wanted, when he laid all the blame on Eve, and Eve when she put all upon the Serpent; Davids heart likewise did run over with this guile, when in the subtle murder of Uriah, he made many pretences and fair excuses for so horrible impiety: on the contrary we see Paul greatly rejoycing in that godly simplicity he used about preaching of the Gospel: This Scripture-simplicity though scoffed at and condemned by the crafty foxes of the world, will at last appear true wisdom when all worldly craft will be so much folly: Jacob is commended to be a plain man, a perfect man, as in the Originall, and he had preheminence above Esau; and truly simplicity in mans conversation, makes all his actions more noble and divine;

for



for as creatures, the more simple and unmixed they are, they produce the more noble operations; as gold the lesse its mixed with drosse; fire, the more pure it is the more lively in operation; so it is here, the more simplicity in any exercise of grace, in any religious duty, the more acceptable it is to God: God forbid all leaven in Sacrifices, now 1 Cor. 5. we are told what the leaven did signifie, hypocrisie and guile; hereby God did require sincerity, sincere is *sine cera*, pure honey, that is separated from the wax, such sincerity and simplicity should be in our hearts, in our lives, pure honey, no mixture of sinne, of earthly affections, so that an heart without guile is a plain, single, sincere heart.

2. *An heart without guile, is when in our heart we are towards God, what we expresse in our duties and in our religious performances:* For indeed this is the very definition of guile, when there is one thing in the heart, and another thing in the mouth; such guilfull hearts God doth often complain of in the people of Israel, *They drawed nigh with their mouthes, but their hearts were farre from him:* And *They sit as my people, and thou art unto them as a pleasant song:* but they will hear thee, and do nothing, *Eze. 33. 31.* so then whensoever thy duties, thy performances are not done out of the abundance of thy heart, this is guile; as our Saviour saith, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,* so it should be, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth prayeth, the ear heareth, the body draweth nigh to God: Thus Paul expresth an heart without guile, when speaking of God, he saith, *whom I serve in my spirit,* Rom. 1. And *Joh. 4.* the Father is said *to seek such who worship him in spirit and truth:* so then here is a good touchstone, to see whether thy heart be without guile or no: Is thy heart agreeing with thy mouth in all duties? Is the heart the fountain, the mouth a streame? Is the heart a root, and duties so many branches springing from it? Then we may say, *Behold a true Israelite, in whom is no guile.* But (alas) how many sacrifices do we offer without an heart, which among the *Romans* was an ominous thing. The Church said, *her eyes slept, but her heart watched,* Cant. 5. 2. Now (alas) thy mouth is open, thou prayest, thou hearest, but thy heart sleepeth; this is guile.

2. When in our religious Duties we are in our hearts what we expresse in our words, &c.

3.  
When we propose holy ends in what we do.

3. An heart without guile, is not only when there is simplicity (as you heard) in respect of the nature and exercise of our graces, that they are separated from corrupt mixtures of sinne, but also in respect of our ends, when we do purely, and in an united manner, stedfastly ayme at those holy and godly ends, which are required in all we do; for certainly if our eating and drinking must be to the glory of God, how much more must our more solemn actions, whether religious or civill? Thus the heart is simple either in respect of graces and the operations thereof, as when a River runs purely, without any mud or filth in it, or when our ends are so heavenly, that we can with those excellent *Benjamites*, hit the mark we are to ayme at, and not *quasi* sinne or transgresse; for want of this, *Iehu* was not blessed, though he had many temporall mercies, because his heart was leavened with this guile. The Pharisees duties, prayers, almes and whole religion had this sower leaven in them, and therefore could not be accepted. Mark the conclusion of that Epistle, *Grace be with all those that love the Lord Iesus in sincerity*, Ephes. 6. 25. or in corruption, *ἰσθαρσία*, which some understand perpetually even to the end, but that is a consequent only, incorruption is when we love Christ for himself, not for corrupt ends, viz. any carnall advantage or earthly emolument we hope by him, when we do not follow Christ as *Judas*, hoping to have the bag and enrich our selves thereby. A heart then without guile, doth hourly and constantly look upon the good end held out in the Scripture, doth not squint awry to temporall profits, but beginneth, continueth, and endeth all in reference to God. Hence the godly are said to be of him, and through him, and to him: As Christ is indeed the *Alpha* and *Omega*, so he is to the soul, to honest gracious hearts. The distinction of the Schools about a twofold love, *amor amicitie*, a love of meer friendship, when we love any party for his own sake, his own goodnesse and excellency; as also *amor concupiscentie*, when we love another for our own ends, not for the parties sake, but our sake. This is to be applied also in some respect to God; its one thing when we love him because of his own worth and goodnesse, another thing when for some temporall mercies only we expect by him; this

this latter is not unlawfull, so that it be not principall; let it be *Hagar* the maid, not *Sarah* the Mistris; yea if this *Hagar* at any time bear up too high, then curb her and throw her out of doors: Oh then labour for this blessed estate, to be able to say, O Lord, I have served thee with a single eye and a single heart, I have not had other lovers besides thee, my love hath been pure and chaste, and truly here is greater reason, for there is enough in God to satisfie thy end: Its no marvell, if the best creature in the world cannot satisfie, because its a finite and limited good, its a drop not an ocean; but of God only may the soul say, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and on earth but thee?* We see the Moon and all the Starres are not able to dispell the darknesse of the night and to make day, only the Sunne can do that; so though all the creatures should arise in their full glory, they cannot make a day, a full blessednesse, That the Sonne of righteousness must only do.

4. *An heart without guile, is that which doth not hide and conceale sinne, but confesseth it heartily, and with great shame and confusion of soul before God:* And this indeed is the main particular of guile to which the Psalmist doth here relate; for you see what *David* saith of himself, how that he kept his sinne close within him, and that was like the winde got in the bowels of the earth, that had no vent, it made him tremble and quake, yea even roar out, and he had no ease, till he confessed to God and bewailed it; yea when he did but say, he would acknowledge his finnes, that is, resolve and purpose effectually to do it, immediatly he had great ease; for this you must know, it was with *David* as it is with many a man, he had guilt of sinne within that stung like a Scorpion, that made him restless; but still he laboured to conquer those agonies, to wear them out, to justifie, or cover, or extenuate the sinne one way or other: As the Hart that hath the deadly arrow struck in her, runs up and down, labouring to eat it out, so did *David*, and so doth many a man, but (alas) still the pain and guilt of sinne continues, till a man taketh the true and honest way, till he doth plainly confesse and open all his heart to God, saying, O Lord why do I cover my sinne any longer? why do I hide it? I am come to lay open my whole heart, to conceale nothing,

4. A heart without guile, hideth not, concealeth not sin, but confesseth it. &c.



nothing, to spread before thee all that evil that cleaveth to me; and truly this is a great guile which men wounded for sinne run into, they deal not plainly with God, they do not touch upon the right soare, they will let all their children go but *Benjamin*; such and such sinnes they will acknowledge to God, but that which is indeed the *Jonah*, that troubleth all, either because of the shame, or some other consideration, or the devil secretly tempting, they never confesse truly to God, and abhor themselves for it; and therefore are like some shamefac'd patients, that will rather suffer their disease to kill them, then acquaint the Physitian with it: Oh then take up *Dauids way*, I said I would acknowledge, and then thou wilt finde *Dauids joy and peace*.

5.  
It disclaims all  
its own worth  
and righteousness,  
and gives  
all to grace.

5. *An heart without guile, is really and truly that which disclaimeth all its own worth and righteousness, giving all to grace, committing it self wholly to Christ.* And thus some Expositors bring in this qualification, by way of coherence with the former, blessednesse lyes in the remission of sinne, a meer gracious favour of God, not in trusting to our own righteousness; according to that rule, *justitia nostra est Dei indulgentia*, our righteousness is Gods indulgence; and then are we justified, not when we have done what we ought, but when what we have not is pardoned unto us: Christ bids, *Take heed of the leaven of the Pharisees, which was hypocrisie*: now a great deal of thier hypocrisie and guile lay in this, that they justified themselves, that they trusted to their own righteousness; thus that Pharisees heart was full of guile, who so extolled himself above the Publican: On the contrary *Pauls* heart stood right to Christ, there was no guile within, when *Phil.* 3. he accounted all things *dung and drosse* in comparison of the righteousness of Christ. Now this is a great matter, to attain to such sincerity and honest dealing of the heart with Christ; to be beholding only to his merits, to give all to grace: to take *Luthers* advice, *Cum non tantum ab operibus malis, sed etiam ab operibus bonis*; take heed not only of thy sinnes, but of thy righteousness and good works also: we may reade of much seeming devotion and religion even among the Jesuites, especially in *Nerimbergius de adoratione Dei in spiritu*

& veritate.

& veritate, where there are transcendent straines of masculine piety, but because self-righteousnesse is in the bottom, justifying faith applying Christs righteousness only is not so much as mentioned or owned, such religion and devotion doth not come from an heart right within; as if that saying, *Its more blessed to give then receive*, were true also in our justification and reconciliation with God; its more blessed to give to him, then to receive from him: I shall put off other properties.

Use of Instruction: What is the necessary way to obtain pardon of sinne? Let all thy duties be without guile, let thy heart and affections be without guile; Its not perfect faith, perfect repentance that God doth expect before he will pardon, but unfeigned faith, and unfeigned repentance: A drop of this water is precious, a grain of this mustardseed will prevaile admirably. It was upon this point, that the devil thought to have made a perpetuall breach between God and *Job*, *Doth Job serve God for nought?* *Jobs* heart (he said) was a guilefull heart; God had given him plenty, riches, and hedged his way in, and then it was no marvell if he served God. Oh then look to this; if ever it be possible the devill will break thee upon this point. Thou hast prayed, thou hast been a professor, but all was in guile, all was in hypocrisie: now its true, the devill doth many times disquiet even the true and sincere Christian in this very point, and its a very heavy temptation, which I shall direct in ere I leave this text, I am now only upon the advising part; To look that all thy religious duties, be thus from a plain heart without guile. This will be a brazen wall: *Hezekiah* kept himself up with this (that he walked in the truth) when he was so greatly environed with all miseries.

Use.



## S E R M. I X.

*More Characters of a Heart without Guile.*

P S A L. 32. 2.

*And in whose spirit there is no Guile.*

6.  
A desire to  
finde out truth  
and to know  
our duty  
though never  
so contrary to  
our advantages  
or former ap-  
prehensions.

THE Doctrine gathered from the text remaineth still in our hands, severall other Characters of an Heart without Guile are to be added ere we can finish this Point: And the first in order we shall mention at this time is, *an earnest and hearty desire to finde out the truth of God, or duty required of us, though never so contrary to our former apprehensions or advantages.* The things of God (I say) and then our duties; For truth, how many shut their eyes, and are afraid to come to the light, for fear their false ware should be discovered! To shun light is a signe of a guilty heart. *The thief hateth the light,* saith our Saviour, What is the reason of it? *Because his works are evil,* Joh, 3. 20. Its a very dangerous sinne, yet very common, that *formido lucis*, a fear of light. When men are interested in false and erroneous wayes, especially wherein their gain, honour and outward profits are concerned, no Owles or Bats are more afraid of the Sunne, then these of the searching truth of Gods word. The Scribes and Pharisees are pregnant examples for this; They were interested in matters of opinion, wherein their own glory and greatnesse was much involved, and therefore *they stop their ears like the deaf Adder,* and would not hear Christ, or the Apostles, *though they charmed never so wisely:* neither arguments to the understanding, nor miracles to the eye, would be any convincing way to them:

Herein



Herein did plainly appear their guilefull hearts, that as any crumb of dust blown in the eye, presently hinders the eyesight, or the interposition of the earth, immediately causeth an eclipse, so any worldly or earthly consideration interwoven with opinions in matters of Religion, doth presently daub up the window as it were, where light should come in. Therefore its good to consider why Christ gives *Nathanael* such a glorious commendation, which we never read was given by Christ to any other, *Joh. 1. 41. Behold a true Israelite in Whom is no guile!* Wherein did *Nathanael* discover such an innocent and sincere heart? Even in this particular it was, *Philip* comes and tells him, *They had found the Messiah*; Now *Nathanael* being prepossessed with false principles argueth against it, *Can any good come out of Nazareth? Come and see*, saith *Philip*, and immediately *Nathanael*, notwithstanding his prejudices, takes the way to be informed; doth not despise or contemn the offer made, but is glad to finde out the truth, and to know whether he be in an error or no; and upon this, our Saviour giveth him that great commendation, *A true Israelite in Whom is no guile.* So that when men though possessed with errors, or prejudiced by self-ends, are yet heartily willing to go out and see, to enquire after the truth manifested, this argueth an heart void of fraud and guile. Consider then there are many excellent truths in matter of religion, whether doctrinall or practicall, and thou wilt not so much as enquire about them, for they are destructive to thy carnall ends, to thy outward glory, and that makes thee wilfully hoodwink thy self. Whereas happily we may say to thee, as Christ to the woman, *If thou hadst known the gift, and who it is that speaketh unto thee, then,* &c. *Joh. 4.* so if thou hadst known the truth of God, and what places of Scripture do manifest the same to thee, thou wouldst gladly have entertained it. As it is thus for truths, so also for duties which God may require of us, we are not hearty and willing in many things to know our duties, and therefore we sit down in the practice of many sinnes, or constant omission of many duties, because we are full of guile, and are not attentive to seek out what we fail in. That is an excellent demonstration of sincerity, which *Elihu* adviseth *Job*

unto in his afflictions, *What I know not teach thou me*; and if I have offended, I will do so no more. What is my duty, Lord? wherein do I sinne? that I am ignorant of instruct me in, this argueth an heart without guile. As plain *Paul* had a good and an honest heart, when he could make such a publike resignation of himself into Gods hands, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* Put thy self then upon the touchstone; Art thou a man enquiring diligently, What would God have me do? Are there not many sinnes I commit, because I see them not to be so? Are there not many duties I constantly omit, because I am not informed out of Gods word? Oh it may be, if I made diligent search, I should abhor my self, I should not dare to do what I do, I could not for a world sleep in that condition I am in; but because I walk in darknesse, I see not the quagmires I am ready to fall into.

7.  
Takes the  
Word of God  
for its Coun-  
seller.

2. *Another Character of an Heart without Guile is, that it takes the Word of God to be his counsellor in all things controverted, and shuteth out all carnall consultations, hearkneth not to carnall friends, to father, mother, or the dearest relations in the world, in this lieth the very quintessence of a sincere heart.* If the Heathen said, That dead men were the best counsellors, he meant the writings of men left behinde them after their decease, because they are not subject to those passions of anger, flattery, &c. which living men are obnoxious unto, and therefore use to speak *ad voluptatem*, more then *ad sanitatem*; how much more must this be verified of the Scripture, which is left as a perpetuall rule and guide in all our affairs: *David* manifested the uprightnesse of his heart herein, when he said, *he made them his counsellors*, Psal. 119. and by them he was forewarned from sinne, Psal. 19. Oh then, is thy heart wanting of advice? thou knowest not what to do? The counsel from the Scripture is as if God from Heaven did speak to thee; here is wisdom and faithfulness in these things, as also righteousness, which are the three requisites in all counsellors; Wisdom, therefore thou shalt never do that which is indeed foolish, or will at last make thee ashamed or confounded. Here is Righteousnesse, therefore thou wilt never be advised to any unjust and sinfull action. Here is Faithfulness,

ness, therefore thou wilt perceive all this counsell to be given out of love to thee, and that for thy eternall good. Its observed of *David*, who was tossed up and down in so many various conditions and severall extremities, he never miscarried when he asked counsell of God; but when at any time he consulted with his own carnall heart, he was alwayes cast upon dangerous rocks. Therefore *Paul* went wisely to work, when he did not consult with flesh and blood, *Gal. 1.* and experience hath shewed what dangerous counsellors fathers, and mothers, and friends have been when Christ hath called us to follow him: Now truly by this it appeareth, how difficult a thing, and what a rare jewell this spirit without guile is: For who is there, in any matter to be done, doth shut out all carnall reasonings, doth go up as *Abraham* to the Mount, and leave his servants and Asles below, his earthly considerations, that so he may hear what God out of his word will speak to him?

3. Another property of an Heart Without Guile, is readily to obey Gods commands of what nature soever, though wholly contrary to flesh and blood, without any disputes, delays, or tergiversations whatsoever: *Abraham* had the honour to be called the friend of God, because of this ready and willing obedience. That obedience of his in sacrificing his sonne, aggravated with so many cutting considerations in Gods command, rings over the whole world; *felix orbis si tales forent parricides*, said an Ancient; Though it was his sonne, his only sonne, his *Isaak*, and to be offered a burnt sacrifice, where nothing was to remain, and he was to do all this with his own hand; yet he gets up betimes in the morning to perform this command; and do not thou say, How shall I know whether my spirit be thus without guile, for I have no *Isaak* to offer? Yes, every beloved sin, every darling corruption, any inordinate affections to some worldly comfort; this is an *Isaak*, thou must immediately sacrifice: so then as in matters of faith we believe, *quia ipse dixit*, because he hath said, *non opus est disquisitione post Evangelium*; so in matters of practice we are to obey, *quia ipse voluit*, because he willeth. *Abraham* from the very beginning, was used to such a blinde, or rather seeing

8.  
Ready obedience.



obedience ; when God called him out of his own countrey, he went, not knowing whither ; here *Abrahams* heart was like the Philosophers *materia prima*, ready to take any formall impression God should put on it, And how greatly God stands upon an absolute obedience without any dispute, though we might bring plausible pretences, appeareth in *Saal*, and in that Prophet who was torne in pieces by the Lyon, when yet for both these, a man might have pleaded fair excuses, but an heart without guile cannot dispute, but it can obey ; as the Martyr said, He could not dispute, but he could burn.

9.  
Doth publike  
duties for  
publike ends.

4. *An Heart without Guile, is that which doth faithfully discharge that publike trust, whether in Church or Commonwealth, upon those publike and holy ends that God doth require ; not aiming at self-advantages, but righteous and godly things.* Publike offices of trust will greatly discover mens integrity, as the fire doth gold and drossle : Thus in the Church we hear *Paul* comforting himself, that he had preached the Gospel in godly simplicity, as in the presence of God: He was not in the number of those that did *δολεῖν*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. as he saith, mingle deceit with the word of God ; he did not as crafty hucksters, *κατασκευῆν*, mingle good and bad together, wine and water : especially you have a notable demonstration of *Pauls* sincerity, 1 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 5, where you have the directory for all the Ministers of the Gospel ; our exhortation was not of deceit nor in guile, but we speak, not as pleasing men but God, which trieth our hearts : Here if at any time we may call *Paul*, *Corculum Dei*, and *Angelum terrestrem*, as *Chrysostome*, because though in the world, yet he is not worldly ; but like the Sun-beames that shine upon the earth, yet gathers no earthly defilements. And as it is thus in the Church, so in the Commonwealth also, men that have hearts without guile, will abhorre to enrich themselves, or injure the publike for their own private greatnesse ; its *res publica*, not *res propria*. as *Tully* urged well. Thus *Samuel* after he had governed the people of *Israel*, what convincing arguments did he use of his integrity, *Whose Ox or Ass have I taken away ?* 1 Sam. 12. 3. He did not defraud them in the least manner. *Moses* how devoid of guile was he, when God being angry with the people, would have destroyed them, and prof-  
fered

ferred to make *Moses* a great man, and to raise up to him a glorious posterity, but *Moses* refused it; Thus what *Tully* said in a Rhetoricall strain, *ne immortalitatem quidem contra rempublicam accipere*, *Moses* did indeed, if we take immortality for a continuall, lasting posterity. It was this upright heart that did so abundantly comfort *Job*, that he was an upright man, though his friends did endeavour to shake his very foundations, *Job* 28. 14. Hath God then betruſted thee with publike employments, if thy heart be without guile, thou wilt faithfully discharge it for those holy and juſt ends God doth require, and not be above others, as chimneys above other parts of the house, which receive nothing but smoky vapours.

3. An Heart without Guile, is very carefull that it doth not take from the glory of God, and attribute any thing to it self. For ſeeing the matter, wherein the guile of our hearts doth manifest it self, is our selves, self-love, self-flattery, self-greatneſſe, self-honours, &c. The more ſingle and upright the heart is, the more carefull it is to deny that, and mortifie that: Hence ſelf-denying is made the fundamentall qualification of every diſciple of Chriſt; a word eaſily ſpoken, but a work very difficultly performed; *ceſſet voluntas propria & non ardebit gehenna*, its Self that kindles all the fire in hell. Now you ſhall ſee how ſpirits without guile have alwayes deſired to exalt God, and to debase themſelves; When the people would have taken *John* for Chriſt, yea when his own Diſciples began with ſome envy to repine at Chriſt and the eſteem he had, ſee how graciouſly he allayeth their ſpirits, *I muſt decrease, but he muſt increaſe*, *Joh*. 3. 30. and therefore *John* proclaimed Chriſt to be ſo farre above him, that he was not worthy to unty his ſhoelatchet: I know nothing wherein hearts without guile can more ſhew their ſincerity, then to have their own glory, abilities, and worth eclipsed, that all may be given to God; to have all like the Starres, that do not appear when the Sunne ariſeth. As *Joab* ſent to *David* to come to him, that he might have the glory in taking of *Rabbah*, leſt it ſhould be called after *Joabs* name if he reduced it. *Paul* ſhewed his plain and upright heart in this alſo, when he ſaid, *Let no man think of us above what he ought to think*, *1 Cor*. 4. 6. Alas, how many great

10.

Is carefull to attribute all to the glory of God, and not any thing to it ſelf.

great Doctors and Teachers have desired the clean contrary of their Disciples, to think above what is meet of them ? as the Donatists would swear, *per caput Donati*, making him like a God. But *Paul* was afraid of such outward applause : especially this heart without guile is seen, when we can rejoyce to see the work of God go on, and his name be exalted, though we be not his instruments, yea though others do it, that will obscure and overtop our glory : Oh this many times doth touch to the very quick, when others shall have all the esteem and all the glory, and thou be laid aside. But how sincere was *Paul* in this ! He rejoyced that *Christ* was preached, though men did it out of contention and envy against him, *Phil. 1*. And he tells the *Corinthians*, that he desireth they might be preserved from all sinne, though he was accounted as a reprobate, *2 Cor. 13*. Though he lost all his glory, and the false Apostle were the only men admired : Oh then see, whether our hearts be free from envy, emulation, and repinings at the gifts, abilities, and graces of others, who do promote the work of God, when thou art laid aside as of no account.

**II.**  
It attends to those duties that are contemned by men of the world, as well as to those that are in credit.

6. *A spirit without Guile, doth not only attend to those things that are glorious and of credit in the profession of faith, but what duties also are of great contempt and debasement in the eyes of the world.* *Christ* foresaw the scorn and reproach which would accompany the powerfull obedience unto his Gospel, and therefore he forewarneth them against such prejudices, *Blessed is he that is not offended at me*, *Mat. 11. 6.* and *Whoever shall be ashamed of me, of him will my heavenly father be ashamed before his holy Angels.* Yet there were some things that had an outward glory in *Christ's* way, viz. to work miracles ; this made a multitude of people run after the Disciples admiring at them : now see how this did affect *Simon Magus* his proud heart, and therefore he would have given money to have obtained the gift of the holy Ghost as well as others : now see with what defiance and indignation *Peter* speaks to him, *Thy money perish with thee, I perceive thy heart is not right within thee*, *Acts 8. 21.* This is to my purpose, because he put himself into the number of beleivers, and yet his whole aim was to have such great wonderfull abilities to work miracles, that all the world should



all the world should admire him; Do not thou then think this is enough, to be for Christ, while the times credit his religion, but observe how thy heart is, when its opposed with all malice, and contemned with all scorn: *Fac me episcopum Romanum & ero Christianus*, said one. If there was any worldly advantage or glory to be had by the Christian Profession, then he would become a disciple in that way: *David* shewed great sincerity of heart, when he danced before the Ark, but see how *Michall*, regarding only worldly state, despised him in her heart for it: but oh the upright heart of *David*, when he said, *I will be more vile still*: He did not think his greatnesse and all his earthly glory, to be too much to yeeld unto that religious worship of God, which made the Ancient say, *Mirror David saltantem, magis quam pugnantem*: so then examine thy self, those mean and despicable things of Christ, as the world accounts them, doest thou with much respect observe? His Word, his Ministers, his Ordinances, that practicall strict way of godlinesse so much slighted, doest thou for all this respect and love them? saying with *Paul*, *God forbid that I should glory in any thing, save in the crosse of Iesus Christ*. This will be a good signe of thy sincerity.

*Use of Admonition*, With all fear and trembling to attend to this great and necessary disposition, without which all our religion, all our duties, all our approaches unto God, are no more acceptable, then a sacrifice full of blemishes and spots: Oh what an heavy confusion will it be, to have God bid thee depart at the last day, when thou shalt plead thy religion, thy duties, thy devotions, and all because here is not truth in the inward parts: To have thee roaring out at that great day; Faith I had, but no true faith; Repentance I had, but there was no truth in it, and therefore am I adjudged to these everlasting flames: Have ye no pity upon your souls, O ye who hear these things? Thou art blessed and not till then, though thou hadst *Solomons* wealth, and *Absolons* beauty, and *Methushelahs* long life, even till thou art the man, in whose spirit is no guile.



## S E R M. X.

*More Characters of a Heart without Guile.*

P S A L. 32. 2.

*And in whose spirit there is no Guile.*

**T**HE description of that blessed man, in whose spirit there is no guile, is of so great concernment, that I am unwilling to give over this subject, till you see him drawn in such lively colours, that he who runneth may understand whether he be the man or no, for we hold out this glasse on purpose that you may see your selves : I proceed therefore ; and the next Character I shall add to the former, and will be the first to the following, is,

13.  
It makes a man willing and spontaneous in Gods service.

*That a man whose spirit is without Guile, is very free, willing, active, and of his own spontaneous inclination, carried into those duties God requireth. He hath a spring of living water within him flowing from him. He is a fountain, not a cistern, which hath no water any longer then is powred into it : This properly is built on the Greek word ἀπλῶς, or ἀπλότης, which signifieth both simplicity, or sincerity, and freeness, or liberality, and willingnesse ; Thus Rom. 12. 8. He that giveth, let him give in simplicity ; or as others, in liberality, freely, gladly : So God is said James chap. 1. to give unto every man richly, or freely, ἀπλῶς, not upbraiding. The reason why sincerely is thus translated willingly and freely, is, because an unfeigned heart is the only fountain of all readinesse and cheerfulness in what we do ; whereas others that want this, are rather compelled and haled to what they do : so then as God commands in Deut. 15. 10. that when they did lend, or give to their necessitous brother,*

brother, they should not have any grief in their heart, while they did it. because *God loveth a cheerfull giver*: So in all thy duties and obedience unto God, there ought not to be any grief or unwillingnesse in thy soul; but thou art with joy and gladnesse of soul to say, *Behold Lord, here I am*: and with Christ to say, *I come to do thy will (O Lord) it is written within my heart*. Oh then concerning this particular, let there be great thoughts of thy heart; What gladnesse, what joy, what full delight of soul dost thou finde in thy service of God? Dost thou run the way of his Commandements? *David, Psal. 51.* prayed earnestly for this. *Establish me with a free spirit*, a spirit that shall readily offer it self unto thy Commandements: as *Deborah* commended those Worthies that willingly offered themselves in the high places of the fields. God never accepted of the meer skins of any sacrifice, but would have the fleshy substance and the fat offered to him; so here, the Lord doth not regard the skin, the outward performance of any duties, but the inward vitals, and savoury vigour of grace: Thou meetest him who rejoyceth and worketh righteousnesse, saith the Prophecy *Esay, Isa. 64.* So then, if thy heart be thus plain, and without all guile, thy soul and all within thee will be enlarged towards God and his holy will, not for every duty without any interruption: No, *the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*: Yea the spirit is also sometimes unwilling, but the main purpose and chief resolution of the soul is, thus gladly and willingly set upon those things which God requireth.

2. *An Heart without Guile, is that whose eye is fastened upon God, to please him only in the course of his life, and therefore doth no more regard either applauses, or the oppositions of men in the world, then the Sunne in running his race, doth stop his course, because of the black clouds that arise from the earth to cover the splendour thereof: This is a pregnant instance of a sincere heart: for either worldly hopes, or worldly fears do commonly make men step aside into guilefull or false wayes. As a man that passeth over the waters, if he look up he will do well enough, but if he look down on the waters, he presently becometh giddy, and cannot go streight on.*

14.  
A sincere man  
his eye is fast-  
ned upon God  
to please him  
only.



Thus if in thy conversation here in this world, thou look up stedfastly to Heaven, to Gods will, to Gods glory, thy wayes will be uniform, thou wilt be the same even in variety of conditions; and to have an holy imitation of God, to have no change in thee: but if thou look down to the world, so as to be affected with their good reports or bad reports, their fawnings or their frowns, this will make crooked pathes. Thus *2 Thes. 2.* Paul when he had affirmed his way of exhortation to be without guile, he giveth you a signe of this, because he did not walk, *as one pleasing men, but God.* And *Gal. 1.* *If I should please men, viz. sinfully, in humouring of them in their sins, I were not the servant of Christ.* And then for the censures and reproaches of the world, *1 Cor. 4. 4.* see what he saith, *Its a very small matter for me to be judged by mans judgement.* Deut. 34. Its spoken of the great commendation of *Levies* faithfulness, That he did not know his father or mother, he did not acknowledge any carnall relations in doing of Gods will, in executing justice upon Idolaters. As then *conspectus oculorum*, eyeservice is a sign of a guilfull heart in a servant; so to do the will of God, meerly because of men: were it not for men, thou didst not care for sanctifying the Sabbath, for hearing the word, for a godly demeanour in thy outward man; oh this is a signe thy heart is not right within thee. That injunction which God gave to *Abraham* is remarkable, *Walk before me and be perfect,* *Gen. 17. 1.* We are so to walk as having God alwayes before our eyes, and a concomitant of this, is sincerity and uprightnesse of heart. Oh then consider, Is God alwayes before thy eyes? it is not what men say, what the world doth, but still thy eye is upon God, this is comfortable. Paul compares our Christian conversation to running in a race; now he that runneth in a race, regards not the acclamations of the spectators, but all his care is, how the master of the game will approve of him. Oh this sinfull condescension, either because of hopes or fears in the world, hath turned many a man into crooked pathes; see what sad influence it had upon *Peter*, he for fear of a carnall displeasing of the *Jews*, did not *eschew* it, *Gal. 1.* walk straightly and directly as he should do; inso-much that by his example *Barnabas* was carried away also to this

this dissimulation. Here you see eminent and godly men carried into a way of guile and dissimulation, meerly from a carnall fear to offend men.

4. Which is a Confectary from the former: Because the sincere man fasteneth his eye upon God, *therefore he is as careful to avoid secret sins as publike, and heart-sins as well as bodily.* The thoughts of the righteous are right, but the counsels of the wicked are deceit, saith *Solomon. Their thoughts are upright, Prov. 12.5.* Oh its a true argument of a spirit without guile, when a mans secret thoughts, affections and intentions, such as the world can take no notice of, are holy and godly: when not only a mans second thoughts, but his first, all his thoughts go directly up to Heaven: *How long sh. ll vain thoughts lodge within thee?* saith the Prophet, *Jer. 4. 14.* *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,* saith our Saviour, *Matth. 15. 19.* and many other sinnes, whereof guile is instanced in, as one; therefore he did purposely set upon this, to rectifie that guilefull principle the Pharisees went by, who thought *the washing of the outside* was enough, but never did *cleanse the inside.* But David, *Psal. 51* did by experience finde, that all painting and fair outsides were nothing, *Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.* Be not then a ravening wolfe within, a rotten sepulcher, a lodge or nest of unclean thoughts and affections; he whose spirit is right, setteth first all right within, and from thence proceeds an outward reformation: so for secret sinnes, *a true Israeline in whom is no guile,* dareth not run into secret wayes of wickednesse, thinking, that because God knoweth him, and God beholdeth him, its more then if men and Angels did see him: The Apostle speaketh of some, that it was a shame to speak of what was done in secret; and certainly the timber in the house, and the stones of the wall will one day witness against many secret practices of impiety. Our Saviour when he bids them take heed of the Pharisees leaven, their hypocrisie, *Luk. 11.* he addeth that vigorous and startling reason; *For there is nothing secret which shall not be laid open, and what is spoken in private shall be heard on the house top.* Why then dost thou thus lye to God, and endeavour to mock him? who would think by thy outward behaviour, that thou art the

15.

And is carefull to avoid secret sins as well as publike and bodily sins.

man, who will be such a beast in private, such a bruit in secret? and thinkest all is well while others know nothing. Oh there is nothing secret, but shall be made manifest; yea it is already manifest to God, and many times he makes such guilt in thy conscience, that thou thinkest every body knoweth thy wickednesse, every man speaks of thy impiety: As *Herod* when he heard of the fame of *Jesus*, presently his guilty conscience suggests, *Its John* whom I have beheaded.

16.  
Lastly it hath  
a uniform and  
universall ha-  
tred to all sins,  
¶.

Lastly, *A spirit without Guile*, hath an uniform and universall hatred to all sinne, and an equall respect to all duties. Guile and deceit doth pick and choose, but sincerity is universall. Hate evil, cleave to that which is good, *Rom. 12*. He doth not say, this, or that evil, but indefinitely, which in a necessary matter is equivalent to an universall. So that whatsoever hath the nature of evill, though little or great, though pleasant or profitable, though beloved and a darling evill, yet hate it: the greek word is *συγγενες*, from whence comes *συζ*, even hell; as if he would have said, hate it as you do hell it self: and indeed the evill of sinne is worse then the evill of hell; for though hell be *malum pœnale*, a generall evill, yet its *bonum ordinativum* in respect of Gods justice, hell is good justice, as a prison and torment is, though nocive evils to the parties offending: so that every upright man hath an inward hatred, and an irreconcilable frame of heart with sinne; now *odium est circa universalia*, where hatred is, it would not destroy this or that individuall, but the whole species; as we have a pregnant instance in *Haman*, who became *Mordecaies* bitter enemy, the text saith of him, that he thought it a small matter to destroy *Mordecai*, but he thought to destroy the whole Nation of the *Jews*, nothing would satisfie his hatred but that: And thus it is with a man whose spirit is without Guile, it is a small matter to leave this or that sinne, but his purpose is, to lay the axe to the very root, to mortifie the body of sinne: God is dishonoured, and the Law is broken, and my soul is defiled (saith he) as long as any of these *febusites* dwell in the Land: and thus on the contrary it hath an uniform respect to all duties, for a *quatenus ad omne valet consequentia*, if I obey such a command because God commands it, and out of love to the Law giver,



Law-giver, then because the same God commands one as well as the other, I will obey one as well as the other. Hence James chap. 4. arguing from this consideration, *He that said, Thy shalt not kill; said also, Thou shalt not commit adultery;* makes this conclusion, which hath a harsh sound in our ears, *He that breakes one is guilty of all:* that is, say Divines, *quoad vinculum formale*, the divine authority and command is violated in all, if you break one: as in some excellent Image, de-face one part and you spoile the whole harmony. Hence David, Psal. 119. argueth, that then only a man *shall not be confounded, when he hath respect to all the Commandements of God:* where observe, that a partiall respect will breed confusion, that is, frustration of all our hopes and desires concerning blessednesse: and then he calls it obedience, *an having respect to Gods Commandements*, which doth not only denote meer simple obedience, but a carefull and diligent attention of the soul thereunto. Thus Zachary and Elizabeth have a glorious commendation, that they were righteous, *walking in all the Commandements of God*, Luk. 1. They were righteous, viz. not perfectly and adequately to the command of God, but in respect of the universality of parts of obedience, though not of degrees, and these properties shall suffice in respect of an heart devoid of guile towards God: I shall further instance in some particulars of an heart without this deceitfull leaven in respect of man, and so shall have done Characterizing of it.

And first, *A man Without Guile in respect of others, is one whose love is hearty and in deed, not in word, and meerly verball or complementall.* John the beloved of Christ, who speaks so much of love, doth antidote against this: *Let us not love in word only, but in truth, and in deed also*, 1 Joh. 3. 18. And Rom. 12. *Let love be without dissimulation.* This is a great matter, and few can abide this touchstone: Mens hearts are roots of hemlock, full of gall, when their mouthes run over with honey; *Joabs Salve*, and a *Judasess Ave*, are such love, that we are to pray God to deliver us from: To betray with a kisse, is ordinary deceit in this world, where most men go with vizards upon them. David was much infested with such kinde of deceitfull men, whose words were smoother then butter, but their hearts were as sharp

17.

A man without Guile his love to men is reall not verball only.

*sharp swords.* This is a contrary disposition to Sheep and Doves, which our Saviour compareth his children unto. Oh then abhorre such a monstrous deformity and contrariety between thy mouth and thy heart : Physicians use to judge of the body by the tongue, but that is no signe in morality, where men abound in all dissimulation and falshood. *Austin* once used an hyperbolicall expreffion in love of a deceased friend, and he thought good to bewaile it in his retractations. Those were blessed times, when all that beleaved, *had one heart and one minde* : and the Heathens by way of admiration cried out, *Ecce quam se mutuò diligunt, & fratres vocant!* But now love is banished, and we are fallen into so many divisions and animosities, that unlesse *Epicurus* his opinion prove true, All things are made of atomes ; or another, By discord, I do not see how we can hold.

18.

It abhors the  
way of lying.

2. *An Heart without Guile, doth exceedingly abhor the way of lying,* cannot endure any false or untrue speeches. Thou art deceived, who sayest of a godly man, *He will not swear, but he will lye* : No ; a man without guile abhorreth all such wickednesse : *I hate every false way*, said *David*, *Psal. 119. 104.* And *deliver me from the way of lying*, *Psal. 119. 29.* The Apostle makes it an argument, that because *they had put off the old man, and put on the new*, *Col. 3. 9.* they should not *lye one to another*, any kinde of lye, whether pernicious, or officious, or a sport- ing lye. The Scripture doth in many places condemn a lye ; *Austin* wrote a book against it, and sheweth that it is not lawfull to tell a lye, though it were to save an whole world ; and exceedingly commends a man, who having hid a Christian, and was sought after by the cruell persecutor, he returned this heroicall answer, *Nec mentiri possum, nec prodere volo*, I cannot lye, nor yet will I betray him : Though *Muscus* condemneth this, and said he betrayed his friend, while he said he could not betray him. And indeed a lye is intrinsically, and in its own nature a sinne, and can never be made good, no more then Idolatry or adultery. As there is no lawfull Idolatry, no lawfull adultery under any pretence whatsoever, so no lawfull lye under any colourable excuse : and under this head we comprehend all *faithfulnesse in promises, covenants, or promissory*

*promissory Oathes*, an heart without guile is carefull to keep them though to his own hurt, *Psal. 15.* and it was part of the Pharisees hypocrisie, by subtile arguments to elude their Oathes: He then that is without guile hath veracity in his affections, and verity in his promises.

3. *A spirit without Guile*, is he, that in all contracts and bargains, abhorreth to overreach or defraud any other man. For guile and deceit is as much seen in buying and selling, in earthly contracts and humane affairs, as in any thing; but a gracious heart loveth plainnesse and true honesty; and indeed it is a shame to a Christian, that his Word should not be as inviolable as an Oath, *Christiana fides*, should surpass *Romana fides*: The Apostle forbids all such deceitfull and guilefull purloining of others, *1 Theff. 4 6.* and what a terrible argument doth he adde, *The Lord is avenger of such*: Thou thinkest to thrive and prosper by such deceitfull wayes, but God will avenge thee, or thy posterity after thee, and see what weight he puts in this matter, as we have forewarned and testified. The Apostle was zealous and earnest in it; and no doubt this was, because they thought if they could overreach, and the world not finde it out, or question him for it, all was well enough.

*Use of Exhortation*: This is the third time, that we presse this duty of a sincere heart upon you, both towards God and towards man, we might think that this word might be established by the mouthes as it were of three witnesses, Certainly there is no such comely and proper thing for a Christian, as a guilelesse spirit; to be within and without the same, for whose copy should we write after, but Christ our Lord and Master? now the Scripture saith, *there was no guile found in his mouth*, no nor in his heart neither. How truly and sincerely did he love us? What ends and advantages could he have in enduring all that misery for us as he did? Its plain, it was us and not ours he sought, and should not we much rather return so to him? especially considering we have not such majesty, and such a lustre of Deity to lay aside for a while for his sake, as he did for ours. Alas, what is our wealth, our liberty, our lives, to that glorious majesty which yet he voluntarily laid aside, and became in the form of a servant, When it would have

19.

Abhorreth to overreach in bargaining and selling, &c.



*Of Uprightnesse of Heart : Or*

*been no robbery to be equall With God : Let us then take Christ for an example, let us have such sincere and upright hearts, as was found in him : and that he might the more fasten this upon us, he once took a little childe and set him in the midst of others, saying, Unlessse a man become like this little childe, he cannot be my Disciple ; by that example forbidding craft, deceit and malice.*



S E R M. XI.

*Motives and Encouragements to Uprightnesse and Sincerity.*

P S A L. 32. 2.

*And in whose spirit there is no Guile.*

Motives or  
encourage-  
ments to Up-  
rightnesse.

I.

Its the only  
perfection  
Gods Spirit  
works us into  
in this life.

**I** Shall at this time conclude this text, reserving what other practicall matter relateth to it, to their proper fit texts : and the work that remaineth, is to consider those encouragements that the Scripture giveth to uprightnesse, or to a guilelesse heart : and certainly if we diligently meditate on them, we shall see that sincerity is indeed a tree of knowledge, they are onely wise that walk by her rules ; and it is also a tree of life, for they onely live and are happy, who walk accordingly.

And first this may abundantly provoke to it, *That thus farre only the Spirit of God doth enable us to keep his Commandements in this life.* Its truth, not perfection in any duty that we can attain unto ; the Law is indeed an exact and accurate rule, binding of us to such holinesse, that by our default its impossible for us to do ; Therefore that affirmative command of *loving God With the Whole heart, minde, soul and strength* ; as also that negative, *Thou shalt not lust*, are never fulfilled

fulfilled in this life : but yet so farre as the truth of Law and sincerity, is required in the first command, and the truth of avoiding all sinne even in the lusts and root of it, so in all the godly it is accomplished ; so that all those texts, where we are said to keep Gods Commandements, and to walk unblameably in all his wayes, are onely to be understood of the truth and sincerity of godlinesse : Those gracious promises, of *circumcising our heart, to love God with all our heart and soul*, Deut. 30. 6. as also of *writing his Law in our inward parts*, Jer. 31. 33. are thus farre fulfilled in us, that the Spirit of God enableth us truly, though not perfectly, to love him, and delight in what is good ; so that a spirit without guile, is all the perfection that we can reach unto : And hence it is, that a *perfect heart, an whole heart, a sincere heart*, are all one in scripture.

2. *A second encouragement, which followeth from the former, is, That this only is that which makes us acceptable to God ; This onely hath the promise of the Gospel annexed to it ; Grace be with all those that love the Lord Christ in sincerity*, Ephes. 6. ult. *The end of the Commandement is love out of an heart unfeigned*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. If you ask, What faith, what repentance it is, to which God hath made his promise ? the answer will be, Only faith without guile, repentance without guile. There is no promise to *Simon Magus* his faith, because he was full of guile : There is no promise to the faith of those persons, *Joh. 2.* who are said to believe in him, yet Christ would not commit himself to them, because he knew what was in the heart of man. He knew there was not that plainnesse, that integrity in them, as they outwardly professed : *If thou believe with thy whole heart*, Acts 8. 37. and *if you seek the Lord with the whole heart*, &c. *Joel 2. 12.* These are the conditions annexed to the promise. Hence *David* doth so often urge this as an argument in his addresses to God : so then though thy graces are not perfect, yet if sincere, thou hast a claim to the promise, thou hast a *wedding garment for the feast* ; thou hast *oyl for thy lamps* : Let not thy heart be troubled, because thy godlinesse is not absolute and compleat ; for this God will accept of, though thou might still be better then thou art ; so that this particular hath both a sting and honey in it, a sting it is to the very heart of all

hypocrites : To what purpose are the multitude of their duties ? What doth God regard their offerings, and whole burnt-offerings ? it is a broken and contrite heart, it is truth in the inward man, that God looketh at : *My sonne give me thy heart*, saith God, *Prove 22. 1.* Oh when will men be unbewitched in this particular : *They even load and burden God with duties*, as God complaineth, *Isa. 1.* but their hearts were unclean, they were not washed inwardly ; every branch will wither, and be thrown into the fire, that doth not grow out of this root. They are a sacrifice without salt, that hath not their seasoning : This truth is like the sword of the destroying Angel, that destroyeth many thousand duties of severall persons at one blow, whose faith, repentance, and all religious duties, are dead and without life, because destitute of this uprightnesse. It hath honey also for those who are truly godly, that yet are often in sad lamentations, bewailing their infirmities, and are afraid to touch even the hemme of Christs garments. Alas, they dare not come to grace, they think the promises belong not to them, who discover so much vilenesse and loathsomenesse in themselves ; they stand aloofe off, as so many Lepers, and cry *unclean, unclean*, not considering this blessed truth, That its uprightnesse and sincerity, which doth interest them in Christ and all his benefits.

3.  
God is ready  
to passe by the  
infirmities of  
the upright.

A third encouragement ; Where there is a spirit without guile for the main, though there be sometimes sad infirmities, yet God is ready to passe them by. Yea, we may stand and wonder at Gods different dispensations herein to two men, when the one hath been an hypocrite, and the other fundamentally sincere : We reade of *Saul*, that expecting *Samuel* according to his appointment, who yet deferd his coming very late, that thereupon *Saul* alledging such importunity of the people which he could not withstand, did sacrifice ; but how dearly did this cost him, though his fact might seem to be alleviated by many circumstances, yet *Samuel* tells him that obedience was better then sacrifice, *1 Sam. 15. 22.* and for this, the Kingdom was rent from him and given to another. Now on the other side, take *David*, Who hath not heard of that horrible murder which he committed upon *Uriah*, and that with much premeditate deceit,



deceit, and bloody craft? yet for all this, which seemeth to be a Camell to *Sauls* Gnar, we see though God in a very grievous manner afflict *David* for it, yet the Kingdom is not removed from him: Now why is there such a difference? surely this may be a main one; *Saul* notwithstanding all his goodly pretences, yet he was rotten at the core as we say; his heart in the bottom of it was wholly false, as appeareth by many other discoveries of it: But *David* though his faults were very foul and grosse, yet because his heart, was for the main, according to Gods will, therefore God is the more indulgent to him: so that although some fruit be bitter, yet if there be a sweet root in the bottom, this will at last finde favour. So we may compare *Judas* and *Peter*, they both deny their Master, and they both repent and are greatly troubled after so great a sinne; but *Peters* tears come from a good pleasant fountain within; *Judas* was like a cloud that may guff out with much rain, but having no constant fountain to supply it, it is presently dried up: *The Lord be good*, said *Hezekiah*, to those who had prepared themselves, viz. in the uprightnesse of their hearts for the Passeeover, though they were not purified according to the Law.

4. This guilelesse spirit is a wonderfull comfort and support in the midst of all temptations and sad afflictions whatsoever. Satan can never overwhelm that soul which hath these Letters of commendation. *Hezekiah* had from within and without, enough to crush him into pieces, but his heart is like Oke, its strong and sound, and all because he knew he had walked before God in truth and uprightnesse. Thus *Paul* also, who may be called the Christians *Hercules*, were it not too low for him, because he devoured more thentwelve, or twelvelabours; and what was that which made him so bold and active? it was nothing but the testimony he had of his godly simplicity, 2 Cor. 1. 12. that he had avoided fleshy wisdom in the dispensation of the Word: Hence this truth and sincerity is so often compared to a girdle in the Scripture, because as a man girt up, is more expedite and fit for any service, so a godly man enjoying this truth of spirit, is very expedite and prepared for any employment, either to do or to suffer. Would you see a

4. The wonderfull comfort and support it brings under all afflictions and temptations.

notable Champion in the field fighting it out with the devil & yea and all his good friends falsely accusing him, and with no other weapon but the integrity of his heart? then read over the spirituall warfare Job had. Oh beloved, this is the water of life, this is the precious cordiall, when a man comes to be either in spirituall or temporall agonies! Who knoweth what heavy bonds of calamities God may tie any man in before he dieth? and nothing will mollifie such chains but uprightnesse. Its not thy earthly honours or greatnesse (alas) they are *miserable comforters*: Not thy parts, thy learning; that thou hast preached much, fasted and prayed often; none of these things, but the simplicity of heart in them that will be a reviving to thee.

5.  
Integrity will  
help us in discerning  
between true and  
false, good and  
evil.

5. *Plainnesse and integrity of heart is a speciall means to help us in discerning between true and false, between good and evil.* This is a choice help to any proficiency in faith or godlinesse: *Phil. 1. 10.* the Apostle there prayeth for believers, that they may be *sincere*: Now what is made a companion to this? *That they might approve the things that are excellent, or that differ*, supposing one alwayes goeth in hand with the other: Canst thou not then discern things that differ? Thou dost not approve those things that are most excellent: This it may be is, because thy heart is guilefull and very false: The heart without guile, is in other places called *the pure heart*. Now as the pure eye not diseased with humours, is thereby more fit and prepared to discern any object, so it is in the heart of a man when that is made clean and washed from all drosse and filth, its thereby made more apprehensive. *Aristotle* said, *Those that are soft in skinne, are more ingenious and apprehensive*. To be sure, those that are soft and tender in heart, are more quick in understanding about what is good. This then will be a great furtherance, to know what is to be believed, and what is to be done, when thy heart is inclined by sincerity: *Nathanael* you heard therefore came so quickly to the knowledge of Christ, though possessed with contrary principles, because he had a heart without guile, and so was willing to have his eyes opened. Oh in many things, its not for want of knowledge, or understanding, but integrity, that makes us turn into crooked wayes

ways. Think you not, and that without the least breach of charity, that there are many Learned men, or convinced men, that know they ought to do otherwise then they do? but their guilefull and hypocriticall hearts deceive them; so that either to be orthodox in judgement, or to be regular and orderly in our lives, I know no better direction, then to treasure up sincerity. Its not only reading of books, and Authors which write on both sides, but an equall poising or balancing thy heart: *Peters* sinfull humouring the *Jewes*, you heard it was nothing but dissimulation, he knew he should have done otherwise.

6. This is a glorious advantage that sincerity hath; viz. its the greatest wisdom and policy that can be used. If *Tacitus*, which is called the Politicians Bible, or *Machiavell*, or any other humane writers of Civil prudence, were all strained, and their wyce taken out, it would not arise to so much wisdom, as that which we see *Solomon* so often treats of in his Divine Politics, and that is integrity. He commends it over and over again, as the greatest wisdom, and as that which will be the best preservative against evil; not only because God hath the greatest care over such, and they are most precious to him, as to be shewed in a distinct head; but because it is of it self directive to the best and surest means for any good end; for you must know, that integrity or sincerity is not a particular grace seated in any particular faculty, as faith, hope, and love; are but the rectitude of every part of the soul, and the right qualifying of it in all its operations, so that uprightness doth rectify the minde and understanding, there is much deceit in its acts; it doth also rectify the will and affections, there is horrible guile in them also: seeing then integrity is such a rectification of every part in the soul, he is thereby much enabled to behave himself prudently in all his deportments: so said *David*, *Sal. I. 01. 1. I will behave my self wisely in a perfect way.* And notable is that expression, *Prov. II. 3. The integrity of the upright shall guide him*, it shall be a Starre to lead him: Reade *Dauids* history, you have severall passages of his carnall policy, as also of his integrity: Now he was never better then when he went in Gods way, never more endangered then when he consulted

6.

Sincerity is the greatest wisdom and policy that can be used.



consulted with fleshly wisdom. And indeed there is great reason, why integrity should be the best prudence, *because it doth only direct to sure, safe and lawfull meanes*, which are not only approved of by God, but also justified in the consciences of all men : whereas carnall policy, takes up every crooked and unlawfull way, never considers *quam bonum*, but *quam utile*, how subservient it is to the end he hath propounded, and by reason of this is forced to shift often, sometimes to the Gods of the hills, and sometimes to the Gods of the valleys, and by this unstedfast and rowling way, it comes at last to fall of it self; and certainly that integrity which only directeth to just and lawfull wayes, is the best wisdom, appeareth, in that all men, who yet oppose it, do pretend to it, and no man could ever do any great thing in the world, did he not possesse people with thoughts of his sincerity. Hence all parties make their appeal to God, as the searcher of their hearts : now certainly this doth wonderfully justifie the maxime I have laid down, *That sincerity is the surest policy*. Worldly wisdom sets a man upon the ice and slippery places, sincerity upon firm and solid land : make much then of sincerity as the master-piece of all wisdom, all things in this world are subject to vicissitudes and changes ; the wheel runs round, and one while one part is uppermost, and another time another part : and therefore there will be times, when carnall and fleshly wisdom will be manifested to be folly, and true integrity will be justified of all men. Its recorded of *Tully*, that first he extolled *Pompey* and set him up, but when he was subdued, then he advanced *Julius Caesar*. When *Brutus* and others had murdered him, then he sets them up as the great preservers of their Liberty. When they again were vanquished, then he began to set up *Augustus* : but all this would not save him, and therefore we hear him in his old age crying out, *O me miserum, O turpem senectutem, O me nunquam prudentem* : and we know he came to a violent death at last, by the procurement of his most bitter enemy.

7.  
It hath the  
promise of  
this life annexed to it.

7. Uprightnesse is not only a means formally enabling to outward happinesse, but it is a speciall qualification, that hath in a peculiar manner the promises of this life annexed unto it. *Salomon* hath many expressions to this purpose : *The Tabernacle*

of the upright shall flourish, *PROV. 14. 11.* The righteousness of the upright shall preserve him, &c. *Prov. 11. 3.* The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, to shew himself strong in the behalf of the upright in heart, *2 Chron. 16. 9.* Yea David calls upon every man, to mark and behold the truth of it: *Mark the upright man, for the end of that man is peace, Psal. 37. 37.* The beginning may be trouble, but the end is peace.

*Obj.* Now to this we have a perpetuall Objection, and that from experience: Doth it not often fall out, that uprightnesse is oppressed? that falshood prospereth? That he who keeps his Integrity, makes himself a prey? Is there not a devilish proverb, *That plain dealing is a jewell; but he that useth it shall die a beggar?* Though if you observe the generations of men, you shall finde, those that use dishonest and false wayes, die with Gods curse upon them.

Now to answer this briefly: First, Many of the outward calamities that befall the upright, are not simply evils, but marks of speciall honour God puts upon them: *Job* his body was full of ulcers, but his heart was pure, and those tribulations he graped with, were only probatory, to try his strength, to draw out his graces, and encrease his glory: They were marks of honour God put upon him: So the afflictions and persecutions the godly endured were not absolutely evil, neither did make them miserable, but they were speciall favours: *To you it is given, not only to believe, but to suffer for his Name:* And the Apostles went out rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suffer for his Name sake. So then, as the good things of this life, are not simply good things, yea and as *Chrysostome* saith, the Scripture doth not usually call them good things absolutely, but with some limitation, the good things of this life, &c. so neither are these outward calamities absolutely evill: yea sometimes their nature is wholly altered, and they are speciall favours of God, in which the godly have rejoyced with unspeakable joy and glory, and for which they have counted themselves blessed and happy.

Secondly, All these temporall promises are not absolute, but limited, otherwise they would contradict those predictions of the many tribulations the godly are to passe through, so that

you must have an eye both to the promises and to those threatnings both together: and indeed seeing there it no upright man, but he either fails in the cause he undertakes, or in the manner of managing it, or in the ends he proposeth to himself; this may well justifie and clear God, though the upright meet sometimes with sharp corrections.

Thirdly, In the fulfilling of temporall promises, we must not limit God to every individuall person, nor to every moment of time: God hath his time, wherein he will honour and clear upright men, we must not desire God should break off his work, before he hath made an end of it; *The end of the upright man, as it was with Job, is peace.* The world at first was a confused Chaos, but at the end of six dayes, it was a curious world; should a man take a text of Scripture, and make a full stop where there is but an imperfect one, he would make it speak blasphemy: As in that place, *Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in iniquity*: if you should make a full stop at *Thou art not a God*, and go no further, it would be heynous blasphemy. Thus in the providence of God, its an high crime, to make a period where there is a comma only; to think God hath done, when yet he is in his work; but this subject is often treated of.

*Use of Exhortation*: Let all these motives make thee in love with a sincere heart: you see its a rich treasure, a strong fort; and though in ill times all should be lost, yet this like *Ruth to Naomi*, saith, *where thou livest I will live; where thou diest I will die*, it will never forsake thee: a drop of this at the hour of death, is better then an ocean of earthly profits.





### SECT. III.

Resolving some practicall Cases of  
Conscience about Sincerity and  
a Spirit without Guile.

### SERM. XII.

*Resolves this Case, viz. Whether men  
that are not truly godly, may not attain  
to a spirit without Guile, in matters of  
Religion toward God, and Duties to-  
ward Man.*

ACTS 26. 9.

*I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things  
contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth.*



You have heard at large the severall Characters of  
a spirit without Guile, and the Encouragements  
to sell all, as it were, and to buy this Pearl.

I now proceed to handle many particular Ca-  
ses of Conscience, which will serve very much to the further

illustration of this Point : and the first I shall pitch upon is, *Whether men that are not truly godly, may not attain to a spirit without guile in many particulars ; Whether in matters of Religion towards God, and duties toward man they may not be unfeigned and sincere, and thereby have much peace and tranquillity of conscience ?* Now for the negative it may be argued, that such a thing cannot be, because the heart of man (as we have heard) is deceitfull above all things, and it is an universall proposition peremptorily asserted in Scripture, *Every man is a liar.* But yet we shall resolve the affirmative, *viz. That many a man unregenerated, and devoid of true grace, may yet in severall things be without guile both towards God and man.* Though indeed, this will not amount to make him an upright man absolutely, but *quoad hoc* only, in such and such cases : and this subject I shall fasten upon the text, as being very pregnant for my purpose. And the better to know this, take notice that my text is part of that famous Apology which *Paul* was put upon to make before *King Agrippa* : In his defence we may briefly consider his *exordium*, and his *narration* : In his *Preface*, he makes use of Rhetorick, insinuating into his Judge, and doth *captare benevolentiam*, by acknowledging it an happiness to plead before him ; not that *Paul* was guilty of any sinfull flattery, for the matter was true ; *Iosephus* commends this *Agrippa* for a prudent and wise Governour, and *Paul* giveth you the reason why he did so preface, because *Agrippa* was expert in the customs and questions of the Jews, and therefore more able to give righteous judgement. His *Narration* consists of two principall parts : 1. Of the life he lived before he was a Christian. 2. Of the wonderfull and extraordinary call he had to Christianity : by both which it might appear, that he had not vainly and rashly changed his profession.

The words I pitch upon are part of the narrative relating to his life while a Jew ; which he aggravateth, 1. From the particular sect he was addicted to. 2. The adjunct of time, from his youth. 3. His zeal in propagating of this : Which is further described in its externall actions, doing many things against Christ and his religion. 2. In the unfeigned thoughts of his conscience herein, *I verily thought I was bound to doe :*

It was not any carnall respect, or earthly advantage did move him, but the pure and meer dictates of conscience: He thought he was bound to do what he did, else he would have sinned grievously against God, and have damned his own soul. So that *Paul* in that opposition against Christ and his Church, was thus farre without guile in his spirit, that he did not go against the light of conscience, he did not persecute what he was convinced in his conscience was the truth of God; but in all this, he did as he thought it was his duty to do. Not that this doth excuse him, as is to be shewed, any further then that he was not a convinced hypocrite in his oppositions of Christ, as many of the Israelites were.

Observe, *That men unregenerated, and devoid of true grace, may yet in many particulars both towards God and man, be true and unfeigned.*

This is a naturall consequence from the text, and this practical matter will be very piercing and searching even into the deep things of mans heart. But before I come to the particulars, one or two things must be a little insisted on ere we can proceed.

As first, Whatsoever some have thought and wrote to the contrary, we take it as a truth cleer from Scripture, *That Paul was not regenerated, or godly, till he had that miraculous conversion from Heaven*: for if this be not made good, my Doctrine will fall to the ground. Some therefore have said, that *Paul* from his youth up was godly, and that he erred onely in the object of his faith, about this particular person to be the Messias: he believed in, and hoped for a Messias, but only that this individuall person was the Messias, he denied: now say they, many good men were godly, and held out such a faith, as *Nathanael* and the Centurion: and they are the rather moved to this, because *Acts 21.1. Paul* did there openly professe, *he had lived in all good conscience before God till that day*, so that it seemed he had alwayes a good conscience before God. But this assertion is no wayes admitted: For 1. *Paul* speaks of himself, as a blasphemers, and the greatest of all sinners, till God had mercy on him, in that extraordinary conversion, acknowledging his estate wretched and damnable, till God had thus



enlightened him, *Rom. 7.* He tells you how ignorant he was of the spirituall sense of the Law; *That when the Law revived, viz. in the spirituall meaning of it, he died, he had no hope or comfort in himself:* And as for that profession, of *his walking with a good conscience*, that may very well relate to that time of his life since his conversion to the Christian faith, for onely of that time was he accused of his enemies: and further, a conscience may be said to be good two wayes; Either first, Because directed and enlightened by the Scripture; as also, cleansed and washed by faith in Christs blood: so his conscience was not good. Or else secondly, Because its a quiet and comforted conscience, following that light and knowledge it hath, though it be altogether enormous; and thus *Paul* had a good conscience; and that might very well provoke *Ananias*, for if he had a good conscience, they had a bad one to accuse him.

Hence secondly, There was a great difference between *Paul* and *Nathanael*, of whom Christ said, *Behold a true Israelite in whom is no guile:* before he did expressly professe his faith in that person Christ, as *Cornelius* the Centurion, of whom *Acts 10.* its said, *he was a just man fearing God, and his prayer was accepted of,* before he had an expresse faith in that individuall person, as the Messias; for these indeed did beleieve in a Messias to come; and not only so, but expected and waited for him, and as soon as there was a sufficient manifestation of him to be the Christ, they believed. But *Paul*, notwithstanding all those demonstrations and arguments to prove that person to be the Messias, yet he did not only, not believe, but did wretchedly and violently oppose Christ; and although he said, *God had mercy on him because he did it ignorantly,* yet that ignorance was not of meer negation, but affected, and of a proud or evil disposition, having the means to believe, but did not.

The two Particulars thus cleered, let us see what *Paul* though unregenerated, was unfeigned in, and without guile:

And 1. *We see his zeal was upon religious grounds, though not with knowledge out of Gods Word.* Even as *Paul* giveth this testimony to the Jewes, *That they had a zeal, but not according to knowledge,*

knowledge. Rom. 10. 2. *Pauls* love and his affections were strong and reall, moved as he thought, because of Gods honour and glory. Hence *Phil. 3.* speaking of what things in his Judaism might before men be matter of boasting, he saith, concerning zeal in persecuting the Church. He was not a cold frozen piece of earth, or a lukewarm Laodicean, but his love did burn as hot as fire: *qui non zelat, non amat; no man loveth any Religion, or Way thereof, that hath not zeal for it:* and zeal is such a fire, that it assimilateth the zealous person into it, as our Saviour said, *The zeal of Gods house had eaten him up,* Joh. 17. as fire devourerth every thing it worketh on. Thus *Paul*, if you do consider all the labour, pains and industry he used to persecute the Church, you must needs confesse his zeal, he said, *he was even mad against the Christians,* Acts 26. 11. Now his zeal, though it was enormous, yet it was in the generall upon religious grounds: Thus it differed as much from *Demetrius* his zeal about *Dianas* Temple, as elementary and customary fire differ: for he was so zealous, only because, if the Temple were destroyed, his trade and earthly gain would fall to the ground, because *he made shrines* for it: but *Paul* abhorreth such base unworthy respects, it was the cause of God, as he thought, that did stir up so much zeal: Thus in the old Testament we reade of many idolaters, that sacrificed their very children to *Moloch*: Here was a religious motive, though deduced therein, and it could not be any earthly respect, for their very naturall affections would have prohibited them, had not a religious awe upon them overmastered all.

2. That which was in *Paul*, and in all like *Paul* in an erroneous way, was, that their consciences though misled, did dictate to them such duties, such worship as they followed. Hence although they had not a zeal according to knowledge, viz. true, and instructed out of Gods word, yet they had a zeal according to their own knowledge: They did not live against any light within them, their consciences did not accuse them, but excuse in all that they did; and in this sense we may say, that many like *Paul*, in false and erroneous wayes, do walk with a good conscience, if by good be meant a quiet, peaceable and satisfied conscience in what they do; although that doth not excuse

2. Their consciences may dictate to them such worship and wayes as they follow, to be duties enjoined by God.

excuse them from being idolaters and damnable sinners before God; for there must be a just and a weighty cause, ere we pronounce against any man in any religious way, that he liveth against his conscience; for though no doubt many do, yet it seemeth very harsh to affirm of this or that particular, before great pains taken with him both in instruction and admonition. I shall not here fall upon that question, Whether an erroneous conscience doth binde to follow it or no? Its certain, no man is bound to sinne: *Paul* though he thought he ought to do many things against *Christ*, yet it was not his duty to do so, but his duty was *deponere errorem*, to lay aside his error: Therefore some say, an erroneous conscience doth *ligare*, but not *obligare*, it bindeth that we may not do against it, but not oblige to follow it; for seeing it is but an inferior judge, if the superior judge speaking in his word condemn what that absolveth, all its condemnation is void. Well, let the case of an erroneous conscience be how it will, this is certain, that many superstitious and erroneous persons have followed that light of conscience they had in the worship of God; Hence our Saviour told his Disciples, That their enemies should think they did God good service in killing them, *Joh. 16. 2.* O it's a wofull thing to have a misled conscience in Religion, it accounts the grossest idolatry acceptable service, and the most bloudy cruelty, acceptable and godly zeal, so that you see a zealous man following his conscience may like *Saul*, run madly on towards hell, and the more fierce he is, the more desperate: we reade of a passage, *Tir. 3. 10.* *The an heretique after the first or second admonition, reject, because such an one is condemned of himself*; From whence some have gathered, That every heretique after means used to reclaim him, doth fight against the known truth in his conscience, and so is condemned of himself; Now though this be the common interpretation, yet I suppose that Interpretation of *Tertullian* more consonant, which makes *condemned of himself* to be this, *viz.* he is the cause of his condemnation, and this sense is very coherent; Avoid an heretique after thou hast used means to reclaim him, because he is the cause of his own damnation, Thou hast done what thou oughtst to do, do not fear that



that any guilt will be upon thee: His destruction is of himself, as God told *Israel*.

3. *Men unregenerated may yet be hearty in respect of the peace and comfort they have flowing from their zeal.* Paul and such as he do not counterfeit a joy and comfort they have in their false wayes, but as their zeal was reall, and their conscience reall, so their comfort and peace was reall: not that they had true and solid joy and peace, for that comes by the Scriptures, and that is wrought by the holy Ghost, it being the fruit of the Spirit, but as their zeal and conscience were reall, though not sound and right, so is their joy and peace: for when a man doth zealously follow his conscience, there doth by naturall consequence follow peace and comfort within, such as Heathens did feel, which made them so commend a good conscience, as the brazen wall, and the only happiness: as now on the contrary, when men do any thing against their conscience, there followeth an accusation and murmuring within, as you see in *Judas*, when he cried out, *I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood.* Now when a man performeth that, which his judgement calls upon him to do, he finde great serenity of minde, and is like the upper region, wherein turbulent Meteors make no confusion; so that you must never judge of the truth of any way in Religion, by the comfort and peace of conscience you finde therein; for all Turks, Jews, Papists and Hereticks have much quietnesse of conscience in discharging that traditionall religion they are brought up in, and would be much troubled in conscience to deny or apostatize from their way, untill their consciences be rectified out of Gods word.

3. They may have much peace and comfort flowing from their zeal.

4. They may be so hearty and unfeigned in their way, that they will attribute all the outward mercies they enjoy, unto that religion they walk in: They will judge God blesteth them, because of their zeal and devotion therein: Thus the Idolaters in Scripture attributed all unto their idoll gods, when they had any successe: and the idolatrous Jews in *Jeremy*, they said all was well with them, and they had all abundance, while they worshipped the Queen of Heaven, *Judg. 17. 13. Micah*, though making Idols and living in Idolatry, thought

4. They will attribute all outward mercies to the way they walk in.

God would give a blessing thereupon, *Judg. 17. 13.* so that we see, people led aside in false and erroneous wayes, destitute of the true power of grace, may have a kinde of true heartinesse in all that they do; not like *Jehu*, who though boasting of his zeal for God, yet aimed indeed at nothing but earthly greatnesse.

5.  
They may heartily leave all those grosse finnes which their naturall light doth condemne.

Lastly, In reference to God, *They may heartily leave the practice of all such great finnes as their naturall light doth condemne.* They do really think such wayes of wickednesse are forbidden by God, whom they worship, and therefore they dare not commit them. Thus also *Paul*, *Phil. 3.* Concerning the righteousness of the Law, *unblameable.* So far as the Law of God forbids any outward sin, (and the Pharisees did interpret the extent of it no further,) so far *Paul* did walk unblameably, none could accuse him therein: Thus many walk according to the morall dictates of nature, that they would abhorre any such unworthy practises: when *Abimelech* knew *Sarah* to be another mans wife, he was very carefull to abstain from her; and God giveth him this testimony, *that he did it in the integrity of his heart, Gen. 20. 6.*

And as for those duties which relate to men, its more unquestionable, that they may be without guile in many particulars. As

6.  
He may be a true and faithfull friend.

1. *He may be a true and faithfull friend: love another upon pure grounds; as Aristotle defineth friendship, to be a love of another, not for any good we get, but meerly for the parties sake who is beloved; and the Heathens give us examples of such friends; and thus we daily see, men that have not the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, yet plain-hearted and faithfull in their love.*

7.  
They may abhor lying, &c.

2. *Men unregenerated may abhorre the way of lying, and all dishonest fraudulent courses: We see even in humane esteem a lye is an unworthy thing, and no man knows how to bear it. The Romanes were carefull to keep their words, that it made a Proverb, Romana fides. To be just and plain in a mans dealing, is that which severall men, guided by no higher principle then nature, are carefull in. Esay saith, Isa. 8. 2. he took unto him faithfull witnesses, and one was Uriah, who is conceived to be*

be the same that brought a pattern of the Altar at Damascus, and so let in idolatry to Israel, yet he had the esteem of a faithfull man.

Lastly, To any secondary end in all publike affairs, they may be without guile; faithfull in their love to the publick: witness many Heathens; in their relations they were placed in, *Joab*, how carefull was he that the City *Rabbah* should not be delivered to him, but be taken in *David's* name; thus, as farre as secondary ends do reach, the publike good, or relation they are in, they may discharge them without guile. But the Scripture teacheth us an higher, and a more noble end, which is the glory of God, and whatsoever reacheth not to this, we may call it rather *minus vitium*, then *true virtue*; and therefore to speak exactly, there are no such things as morall virtues, but Divinity would lift them up to higher motives, and that sheweth us a more excellent way.

8. They may be without guile as to any secondary ends in all publike affairs.

Use of Admonition, to all such who are zealously and conscientiously affected in matters of Religion, and finde quietnes of conscience therein, to be wary and ponder things well. It may be thou art no better then a *Paul* yet before his conversion; its good to be zealously affected in a good thing, *Paul* said it by experience: Be then as Justice is pictured, alwayes with a Balance in thy hand, ponder and weigh things from the Scripture; if you runne never so swiftly, yet being out of the way, you make the more haste to destruction: especially this concerneth all those that are zealous for Religion from education and custom onely.





## S E R M. XIII.

*Sheweth, That for men to act unfeignedly according to their Consciences, without guile, in their own way of Religion, doth not demonstrate them to be such sincere men as God approves of and unto whom the Promises belong. A necessary Item for these Times.*

A C T S 26. 9.

*I verily thought I was bound to do what I did, contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth.*

**T**HIS text hath afforded us already this remarkable Position, *That men though not regenerated, may be hearty and unfeigned, in many particulars both of Religion towards God, and righteousness towards man.*

Their hearty and unfeigned zeal is insufficient.

I.  
Their zeal is not rectified by the Word of God.

Now I come to shew, *Wherein the insufficiency of such hearty zeal doth appear :* and that although they live not against the light of their conscience, or rebell against that, yet they have not spirits without guile, nor are those upright and sincere men, to whom the promises do belong.

And first, *They do grossly fail in this, that their religious zeal, and hearty devout affections are not rectified by the Word of God.* Though they have a zeal according to their own knowledge, yet

yet not according to knowledge indeed, viz. that knowledge, which is to be had from the Word, and herein lyeth the very essence, and very fundamentals of all such mens miscarriages: We blame not *Paul*, or such like him, for cold and lukewarm affections; we accuse them not that they go against their judgements, and their own light that shineth in their breast; but herein we arraigne them, that in all this they are not directed by the word of God: the Word of God hath often this epithete, that it is right; as they are exceeding true in themselves, so they are the rule of all truth: All Religion must be Scripture Religion, all worship Scripture worship, all zeal Scripture zeal; so that let a man have never such sublime knowledge, and such burning zeal, yet if it be not according to the Law and the Testimony, there is no light in them, *Isa. 8. 16.* Its but a vain worship of God, because God doth not require this as our Saviour instructeth, *Matth. 15. 9.* so that the summe of all, and that into which all Religion must be resolved into at last, is the *Scriptures*, the word of God; for if you once lay this aside, why should not the Turkish devotion be as good as thine? why should not the Mahumetan zeal be as acceptable as thine, but only this makes the difference; what may be proved by Scripture is approved of by God; so that all those arguments, *Its my conscience, I verily think I am bound to do thus: Its upon my spirit: I finde much comfort and much sweetnesse in my Religion;* all this is nothing, for all false religions can and do say this: but hast thou the word of God to warrant thee? doth that justifie thee? all things else are but an enpty shadow: This is the first and the main thing.

2. Such devout hearty men are not regenerate, because the motive of all their religious zeal is but humane, not from divine and supernaturall graces, not from faith in Gods word, but tradition, custom, and education: If you had asked *Paul* in this hot Judaisme he was in, What made him so active? why did he run thus up and down like a mad man to oppresse and overwhelm the Christians? he would have said, Zeal for God, according to the tradition of his Fathers: Thus *Acts 22. 2.* he there declareth, that he was taught according to the exact manner of the fathers, and zealous as they were to this day.

2.

The motives of all their Religious zeal is but humane.

Thus all the Pharisees, what were the coals that kindled such a zeal within them, but tradition from their Fathers? Thus *Joh. 4.* the woman argued, *our fathers worshipped in this mount.* Thus the Heathens, especially *Symachus* their notable Orator pleaded to the Emperor for their Paganish Idolatry, to whom *Ambrose* answered, Oh saith he, *sequendi sunt parentes, qui feliciter suos sunt sequuti, contumeliosa est emendatio senectutis,* as he goes on: Let us follow on to this, as they happily followed theirs; its a contumelious and reproachfull thing to think to be wiser then them: so that this is a plain demonstration, that all the religious zeal and devotion, which possibly can be shewed, that yet hath no better grounds then tradition, or custom, or education, cannot be acceptable to God, neither doth it argue any regeneration in us: Oh then how may this particular confound the hopes of many, who put forth some hearty devotions in the matters of God, but the motive of all, is not a divine faith, onely education and tradition, such which all the religions in the world, though never so absurd and idolatricall, can and do pretend unto.

3.  
Such are ignorant of the  
soul pollutions  
that are in  
them.

3. Such zeal as *Pauls* was, doth not argue a true upright heart, because all such, in the highest acts of such religious worship, are *wonderfull ignorant and senselesse of the deep, inward, and soul-pollutions that do cleave to the heart.* Though they may be carefull to avoid all outward, grosse, and foul sinnes, yet they are ignorant of the heart-filthinesse, and so not carefull to cleanse that mudded fountain: Thus *Paul* himself all the while he ranged thus up and down like a dived or a roaring Lyon, seeking what innocent lamb, what Christian he might devour, he never reflects upon his own brutish nature, he felt not what a monster and beast he was within, as he himself *Rom. 7.* doth at large tell us: Oh that is an excellent Chapter, describing to the very life, what quiet, self-justifying thoughts such men have! how ignorant of the depth and breadth of originall sinne within them! what a fountain of all poison is within their hearts, though they know it not? and this our Saviour did constantly charge upon the Pharisees: They did not know, or regard what their hearts were within: The pride, the hardnesse, the selfishnesse and



and self-flattery, no stones are more sencelesse, then they are of such pollutions within them; There is no such touchstone to discover whether a man be regenerated or know any thing experimentally of the work of grace, as the understanding of spirit-defilements, bewailing them, and breathing after an heart-godlinesse. The heart is all in supernaturals as well as naturals: Are thy sinfull thoughts, affections, corrupt intentions and such invisible motions of the heart towards sin an heavy burden to thee? This argueth a life of grace within, but *Paul* in the midst of all his active zeal felt not the least of this inward soul-bitternesse.

4. *Such zeal and hearty affections are yet imperfect, because they are alwaies accompanied with an heart-fulnesse, with a sufficiency of our own righteousness; Paul speaks pregnantly to this matter, Phil 3. where reckoning up his priviledges, and all his zealous forwardnes for the Law, which in an humane account were great things, no godliness or happiness like that; he doth renounce all this seeming worth with great disdain, calling such things dung and drosse for the excellency of the righteousness through faith in Christ; and wherein did the Pharisees sin more manifest it self then in self righteousness? oh then do not matter all the greatest devotions, the most humble and obsequious expressions of Religion, if there be not a denial of all these for Christs Righteousnesse. Give me an active zealous man that yet breatheth after and only longeth for Christs fulnesse, That cannot be without Christ, That mourneth and praieth after Christ: All the false zeal and religion that is in the world, doth lift up and spiritually inflame: It's a disease, a tumour, or swelling in a mans soul, They doe not throw away all that Christ alone may be wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification. It pleased God that all fulnesse should dwell in Christ, and that we should be compleat in him: Now there is no false worship or Religion in the world but it leadeth a man to a fulnesse and a compleatnesse in a mans self, or in the zealous works he doth for God: Infomuch that this is one speciall mark whereby we discern the divinity of the Scriptures, and their immediate inspiration by the holy Ghost, that contrary to all Philosophy and humane reason*

4.  
They are full  
of self-righte-  
ousnesse.

reason, it teacheth a righteousness without us, and not in us, so as to be wrought by us. The great Masters of morality, *Aristotle* and others knew no such way, nay would as much have derided it, as at a crucified God, or the resurrection from the dead: when then you see a man diligently and devoutly acting for that Religion he thinketh the true, enquire, how he is affected with Christs righteousness, whether his inward thoughts are of all things as dross in comparison of him; whether he be constantly in his prayers, as the lame man at the pool of *Bethesda*, earnestly longing to be put into this fountain of living water. ; all the prayers, all the zealous worship *Paul* was busied in, was wholly destitute of Christ; and we see in Popery, whatsoever descriptions the Learned men use in their books, as if they would exalt Christ, yet the practised devotion is wholly ignorant of a spirituall application or improving of him; but their works, their devotions accomplished, are the Christ they make to themselves.

5.  
Their worship  
is Idolatry and  
Blasphemy.

5. *Even this hearty and conscientious zeal is insufficiency, because all this religion and worship, though done according to our conscience, is yet Idolatry and blasphemy.* Its not the error of our conscience, or our ignorance, that will make those sinnes no sinnes; Indeed if God did not regard one way of Religion more then another, or that truth were not any such thing indeed, but as men have thought and imagined, so truth should be; even as the colours in birds or fowl, appear according to the light that shineth upon them; then something might be said in defence of this. But we see the Scripture pronouncing of all those Idolaters, who yet lived according to their education and knowledge, that they were Idolaters howsoever; and as such were punished by God, and our Saviour said; That which was highly esteemed amongst men, viz. in respect of worship and religion, is an abomination before God, *Luk 16*. Thus likewise we see *Paul* when converted, doth acknowledge those wayes of his, to be full of blasphemy and bloody persecution, though he thought he was bound to do what he did. And by this you see, what little refuge there is in the plea of those who maintain damnable heresies, and whose doctrines spread like a

Cancer,

Cancer, because they do according to their conscience, They think, they ought to do what they do. For all the Idolatry that ever was in the world, all that ever the Heathenish persecutors, or the Jewish enemies to Christianity have done, came in many of them from a seduced and erroneous conscience; neither can there any solid reason be given, why the Idolatry in the old Testament should be lesse indulged then blasphemous, damnable heresies in the new, that overthrow either the divine nature of Christ or the holy Ghost, or the authority of the Scriptures, which are the fundamentals of Religion. Certainly the honour and glory of God is as precious, as dear to him now as ever, and by the word of God, especially the new testament, the testimonies are as clear for the divine nature of Christ ( I speak not of the sublime questions or manner of explication of it, but only the existency, that he is truly God ) to them that believe Scripture, as that there is a God, is or may be clear to them, that have nothing but the book of nature to prove it from: It is not then thy ignorance who enjoyest the means; or the error upon thy conscience which seduceth thee, that will acquit thee before God. Christ from Heaven said to *Paul*, *Why persecutest thou me?* Acts 9.4. though he replied, *Who art thou Lord?* although as was hinted before, God had mercy on him, because he did it ignorantly, yet that ignorance was wilfull and affected because he had means to the contrary; Insomuch that a learned Critick *Tarnavicus*, thinks it should be translated, *although I did it ignorantly*, as the Hebrew *Chi*, often in the Scripture: Howsoever, that this ignorance did not excuse, is plain, because *Paul* makes Gods conversion of him such an extraordinary instance of the riches of Gods grace, that makes himself an instance, that all the ages to come may wonder at: and there is no man so affected with, and passionately magnifying the grace of God to sinners, as *Paul* is, from his own experience, which he could not have done, if his ignorance and erroneous conscience, had acquitted him for his former sinnes. Thus you see, how easily it may fall out, that men though hearty and devout, according to their knowledge and way in matters that relate to God, may yet be wholly destitute of the work of grace



geance in their own souls, and are like a field of fat soile, which because not rightly husbanded, brings forth much indeed, but of weeds and unprofitable briars fit for burning. Do not therefore runne to thy perswaded conscience, as a safe sanctuary; for many horrible idolaters and blasphemers have been hereby mislead: and of all Histories in this kinde, that is most remarkeable, which *Voetius* in his disputes of Atheism, relateth, concerning one *Vamirius*, who once wrote a book to prove there was a God, calling it *Amphitheatrum divinae providentiae*, yet afterwards apostatized into a meer speculative dogmatizing Atheist, and did endure burning to death at *Paris*, professing this blasphemous assertion: Shall his deluded and cauterized conscience plead for an absolution? But you will say, Do not such zealous men as *Paul* deserve some pity? or is there no way to be mitigated? *Answ.* In some respects their condemnation will not be so great, as some other kinde of men in the world, whereof there is too great a number; As

First, Those who are active and violent for a religious way, opposing the truly godly, contrary to their conscience and knowledge: This made *Lyrinensis* of old, and later *Dionysius* distinguish between the heads or seducers in heretical wayes, and the followers or seduced, who many times went in the simplicity of their spirit; no doubt a great deal of difference is to be put between such, for if any go against light and knowledge, its likely those who have the most understanding, and are the chiefeest in parts: therefore *Pauls* case was farre more excusable, then those malicious Pharisees, whom our Saviour charged with sinning against the holy Ghost: Oh this is a bloody aggravation, and such fire as this is like that of hell: Thou art a devil incarnate in this particular.

2. They are more excusable then meer Atheists or Atheistical men, that make the matter of conscience or Religion, to be meer notions or niceties; *Paul* was farre more commendable then that *Gallio* who cared not for these things, of Religion then on foot: This is the carnall policy that reigneth in the world, to account the name and repute of Religion profitable

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profitable for many designs, but the thing it self a burden.

3. They are better then cold, lukewarm professors, though of the truth; how odious such frozen neutrall men in Religion are to God, appeareth by Gods expostulation, *I would thou wert either hot or cold, because thou art lukewarme, I will spue thee out of my mouth.* This expression sheweth how loathsome and abominable such are to God.

Lastly, When mens zeal for a way of Religion, because apprehended to be of God, is therefore drawn out: it is farre more excusable, then when men are hot and violent onely for carnall and earthly respects; I make a great difference of *Paul*, from those other Pharisees that did all things to be seen of men; or from *John*, who boasted of much zeal for God, but it was to get an earthly Kingdom; or *Demetrius*, whose heat was wholly feavourish from inordinate love to these things below.

Use of Instruction, To bewaile the wofull neglect of that zeal and fervency which ought to be in Christians walking in the truth: Oh how do Idolaters, and hereticks, and erroneous persons go beyond us and shame us! Did that good man *Jambo* weep when he saw an whore curiously decking her self to please her enamoured lover, because he could not be as dilligent and as circumspect to please God: what rivers of tears then may run out of our eyes, to see the Papist, the heretick, so active, so forward, so devout in their false wayes, and we stand still? They worship Idols, that have eyes, hands and feet, but use them not: we on the contrary do not worship an Idoll, but we that are worshippers are like Idols. *Paul* thought he was bound to oppose and persecute the way of Christ, and he did it with all his might. Thou knowest thou art bound to be more diligent in sanctifying the Sabbath, more frequent in prayer, reading, and all other religious duties, but thou mindest them not, neither art carefull for them.



## S E R M. XIV.

*Shewing whence it is, that even a godly man may be greatly troubled and perplexed, fearing he is an hypocrite.*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret finnes.*

**I**N the former part we have the Psalmist commending two Books to be studied by all, as being made by the most wise and holy Author that ever was, viz. God himself. The first Book, is that of the whole world, especially the Heavens, the glory of the world, and the Sunne the glory of the Heavens. There was one Philosopher *Endoxus*, thought he was born for no other end, but to behold the glory of the Sunne: but the Psalmist teacheth us better and more divine Philosophy, to admire the glory, majesty and wisdom of him that made the Sunne; and that devout man said better, *Si tanta pulchritudo in creaturâ, quanta in Creatore!* If a creature be so glorious, how much more is the Creator! Now the Psalmist sets forth the excellency of the Sunne,

1. From the place where it is set, *He set a Tabernacle in the Heavens for it*: There is the throne erected for this King of the earth. If *Solomon* in all his glory, was not like a Lilly of the field, much lesse can earthly glory be like that of the Sunne in the Heavens; yet the spirituall and heavenly glory, which the godly shall enjoy, is compared to this, yea it is farre above it.

2. The



2. *The Sunne is commended for its beauty*, a bridegroom coming out of his chamber : *solem e mundo tollere*, is to make the world a Cyclops, a huge body without eyes.

3. *The velocity and swiftnesse of the course* : It rejoyceth as a strong man to runne its race. This text overthroweth that fancy of the Sunnes standing still, and the earths moving ; and let them not think to put it off, though the Scripture speaks according to our sense, for the assertion is so peremptory of its motion, that if we give *why* to this, we may overthrow the whole Scripture upon this distinction : Then those that held Christ had only a phantasticall body and not a reall, may come in at this hole ; the circular motion of it, his going forth is from one end of Heaven to the other.

4. *From the vivificall influence thereof*, nothing is hid from the heat thereof. The Hebrew word for the Sunne, comes from a root, that signifieth *ministrare*, because its the servant of the whole world. And observe here by the way, that the Scripture commending the Sunne and the Starry Heavens for all its proper uses and ends that we should make of them, saith not the least word of *Judicial Astrology*, or foretelling future events in the world by them : whereas if that were true, which is said, That God by the Heavens as by a Book, hath revealed what he would do, it would have commended the study of the Heavens for this end to all ; for if God hath manifested his will by it, then certainly he would have commanded us to search for it there, as he doth command us to finde out his will in the Scripture. But the Scripture is so farre from commending such a study, that it expressely forbids it as a grievous sinne, *Deut. 18. 10, 14.* and *Jer. 10. 2.* and truly, that Judiciall Astrology is a vanity, appeareth by this reason : They undertake to foretell contingencies, for the most part, from the position of the seven Planets ; now there being so vast a number of fixed Starres, which have influence in earthly things in some proportion as well as the Planets ; how is it possible that they should foretell any certain truth ? *Albuzmazer* the chief of that Astrologicall superstition, foretold, that the Christian Religion, should not continue above a thousand four hundred years ; but experience hath discovered the wicked

ked falshood thereof. Not to tell you, that God makes it his property onely, and the Prophe:s he immediately inspireth, to predict things long before they come to passe.

The second Book the Psalmist commends, is that of the Scripture, and that onely is distinct and clear, giving a soul-saving knowledge, so that we are more to rejoyce in the Word of God, and to account that a more necessary and precious treasure, then Heaven and earth: The Word is commended from excellent adjuncts and properties, as also most blessed and gracious effects: Now when the Psalmist had described these two Schooles, he seeth they are nothing without a third, the School of grace; That God would teach him and pardon his sinnes, especially considering the exactnesse of Gods word, and what holy obedience that requreth; he doth in a most sad and bitter manner utter the complaint of his soul in my text. In which words consider an exhortatory exclamation. 2. A vehement postulation. The exclamation, *Who can understand his error?* That is, None can. The Hebrew word for errors, signifieth all those crafty and subtle wandrings of the soul: the hidden counsels and secret lurking lusts that are in the heart. Even as crafty beasts they have their holes and their dens to lye in, and it is very hard to finde them out. O mark it, Even *David*, a godly man complains thus; That he doth not know himself; that there is more evil in him then he can finde out, and thereupon you have his cautelous and jealous prayer, *Cleanse me from secret sinnes*: what sinnes Lord, I do not know, I do not discover in me. Oh there may be much unknown wickednesse in my heart, do thou cleanse me from it.

So that the first Doctrine I shall observe is,

*Doct.*

That godly men may be much troubled and afflicted from fearing they are hypocrites.

*That Godly men may be greatly troubled and afflicted under this meditation: That there is more evil in them then they know.* All the hypocrisie and naughtinesse within themselves, they cannot fathom. Oh then what shall they do?

Now upon this text and doctrine, I shall come to a second practicall case, concerning a spirit without guile: viz. *What a godly man should do, that is afraid he is an hypocrite*: That thinks his soul is full of guile. He discovers and findes much evill, and

and then he knoweth not what depths of sinne may be in him besides all this, and therefore his soul is troubled, and he hath no rest in his bones because of this spirituall disquietnesse. To pour oyl into this spirituall wound, let us first by way of preparation, consider whence it doth arise, that a godly man may thus sadly be troubled, fearing himself to be an hypocrite and a castaway: and the grounds are many.

1. *That unsearchable depth of corruption, which cleaveth to every man.* This is the fountain of those hid and secret finnes David prayeth to be cleansed from. As the graces of the Gospel are unsearchable, and the riches thereof are past finding out, so that naturall corruption we carry about with us is exceeding deep; we never came to know the worst of our selves; our hearts are like *Ezechiels* vision he had, still there was more abominations, and yet more, when we have discovered so much as shall make us a noysome dunghill to our selves, yet there remaineth something to be discovered: As they say all the parts of the world are not yet discovered, so not all of that world of sinne which is within us. *Gen. 6.* when its said, *the imaginations of the thoughts of our hearts are onely evil:* The Hebrew word for imagination, signifieth that the heart is a constant forge or shop of evil, wherein do constantly arise evil thoughts, corrupt affections and imaginations, as from some bitter fountain flow constantly some bitter streams: No marvell then if the godly man be in such sad perplexities, seeing there is such an unknown gulf of sinne within him.

2. *Another ground of this spirituall perturbation, is the spirituall exactnesse of the Law, which doth strictly oblige to every Iota or tittle, to universall and perfect obedience, cursing all failings therein: and this seemeth to be the occasion of Davids complaint in the text, To those that keep his Commandements, there is an exceeding great reward: but who are they thinks David, I am none of those, I cannot understand, or bewaile all the evils of my doings: Therefore we shall alwayes observe, that those who are filled with a Pharisaicall righteousness and self-holinesse, they have alwayes measured their duty by their power, and not by the Law; they have denied the strict obligation.*

Whence it ariseth that a godly man may be in great fear he is an hypocrite.

1. That depth of corruption which cleaveth to every man.

2. The spirituall exactnesse of the Law.



obligation and spirituall extent of the Law, because their obedience hath been only externall : They have not raised up themselves to the Law, but brought down the Law to themselves ; as if the Heavens should come down to the earth, and not the earth be raised up to the Heavens : Thus the Jews and the Pharisees, their perpetuall doctrine was, that the Law did only require externall obedience ; and when our Saviour expounded it, *Matth. 5.* of heart-sinnes, it was a paradox to them ; and thus it is still in Popery, its their professed doctrine, that the Law doth no further oblige, then its possible for us to perform it in this life ; and by this means they make many thousand motions of the heart no sinnes, which yet *Paul, Rom. 7.* doth many times call sinne, and such sinne as is to be mortified ; that he groanieth under, and bewaileth as a miserable captivity. But the godly heart with *Paul, Rom. 7.* hath learnt to understand the Law better, and thereby is convinced of many sinnes, which the naturall man never regards ; *The Law is spirituall, saith Paul, but I am carnall sold under sinne. I finde, when I would do good, evill is present with me, and this lust leadeth him into captivity, and its a Law in his members warring against the minde.* Oh then wonder not, if the people of God, who feel such combates, and strivings within them, of Law against Law, the Law of the members against the Law of the spirit, that they like *Rebecca's twinnes strive in the wombe*, and which makes the case more doubtfull, is, that the flesh so lusteth against the spirit, and so farre prevaieth, that the things the godly would do, they do not ; and oh the perplexities and agonies which are then raised in the hearts of the godly, That they cannot believe, be heavenly minded, so mortified as they desire ; yea they finde themselves many times foyled and overtaken, which makes them cry out, Is this to obey Gods Law ? doth that command no better ? Is this to love God, to serve him as the Scripture commandeth ?

3.  
From the experience of the fallenesse of their hearts.

3. Therefore they are apt to be thus surprized by these fears, from the experience they have of the deceitfulnesse and falsenesse of their hearts : They have been perswaded, they could do such and such things for God ; they have thought they could bear

bear such afflictions, they could overcome such temptations; but when they have been put upon the triall, oh the base treachery of their hearts, then they murmur, then they repine, then they are impatient. As *David* when it was well with him, he thought his mountain was settled, *Psal. 30. 7.* he could never be moved, but God did no sooner hide himself, but then he was troubled. Thus *Peter*, he thought though all men should forsake him, yet he would not, but when he comes to the triall; yea indeed before it was any great extremity, he forsaketh and denieth his Master. Now such experiences of their false and weak hearts the godly have; Even as sick men, when on the bed, think they are able to walk strongly, but no sooner do they rise up, but their strength presently faileth them; must not this therefore put them into sad perplexities, doubting what they are, and whether they are sound in the main or no?

4. Another occasion of such black temptations, is, the tenderneſſe of their hearts, avoiding the very appearance of all sinne: for seeing the Scripture requireth it, *1 Theſ. 5. 22.* they are carefull not to touch this pitch lest they be defiled; they do not only avoid evil, but the shew and the appearance of it: Now the godly being thus tenderly affected, its hard not to degenerate into scrupulosity, and even slavish fears: As in tender and soft wood wormes are apt to breed, thus Christians who have tender affections, have many times weak judgements, and do not fully understand that lawfull Evangelicall liberty which is allowed them, and the not knowing this breedeth many perplexities, and troublesome thoughts within them, so that it is an happy thing, when a sound minde and a tender heart are joyned together. A great judgement without tenderneſſe, many times works a sinfull largeneſſe in mens wayes, it causeth such a wide throat that can swallow down Camels, and a tender heart, without a sound judicious minde, doth many times raise fear and doubts where there ought to be none, but both these together make an excellent temperament, even ad pondus as it were in the soul.

5. Another cause which makes the godly thus fear themselves, is the slothfulneſſe and spirituall decays they finde upon their souls:

4. The tenderneſſe of their hearts.

5. The slothfulneſſe and spiri-

small decayes  
they finde in  
their souls.

*souls*: for as the Apostle urged, *that the giving heed to make their calling and election sure, would be by adding one grace to another, 1 Pet. 1. and abounding in all fruitfulness*; so a great cause of spirituall trouble, and fear of being utterly undone, is the barrenness of our lives; That we are so unfruitfull, that our duties have no more life and fervency in them: Oh how often do the godly deserve that reproof Christ giveth the Church, *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and strengthen the things that are ready to die, Rev. 3.* Now then, as in winter there doth outwardly appear no difference between a dead tree and a living, both are without fruit and leaves: thus truly, between a barren and a slothfull Christian, and another dead in sinne, there seemeth to be little outward difference; yea its Gods way to chastise his peoples slothfulness, by absenting himself from them: Even as the mother sometimes leaveth her childe alone, or in the dark, to make it cry more earnestly after her: Thus when the Church was slothfull, and would not rise to let Christ in, knocking at the door, this made Christ withdraw himself for a while, which stirred up importunate longings after him again.

6.  
Because of the  
infinite know-  
ledge of God,  
as his all-see-  
ing eye.

6. *Therefore they are thus solicitous about themselves, because of the infinite knowledge of God and his all-seeing eye, which knoweth more by them, then they can, and therefore they thus think*; If I be so vile and loathsome in my own eyes, how much more must I be in Gods eye, who knoweth farre more corruption by me then I can by my self? The Apostle argued thus, *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts*: and Paul said, *Though I know nothing by my self, yet am I not thereby justified, for it is God that judgeth, 1 Cor. 4. 4.* This is a remarkable place, though thou didst know no evil by thy self, didst not discover that wickedness and filthiness which thou doest, yet thou couldst not gather an inherent justification from thy own righteousness, because *its God that judgeth.* And Eliphaz though erring in his application, yet in the generall spake right, that none could be just and pure as his Maker, *for he charged even his Angels with folly, Job 4. 18.* Oh when they think, though this be true and good in my apprehension, yet God seeth faults when I cannot.

Lastly,



Lastly, That which is no mean cause of the sad fears of godly men in this particular, is the sad revolt, and desperate apostasy of those who seemed eminent for Religion: oh this makes them quake at the very heart; such Starres fall from Heaven, what then will become of such a clod of earth as I am! such green trees burn, what then may dry trees expect! The Apostle Paul speaking of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* their apostacy, he saw how this would shake the godly; he addeth therefore by way of comfort, *The foundation of the Lord standeth sure*; so then, they finding in Scripture how farre even hypocrites and reprobates may go, this works a daily perplexity in their souls: and thus you have the causes of this sad trouble on the godly mans soul.

Use is of Admonition, partly to the godly; Do not think thou art therefore undone, and no godly man was ever like thee because thou art assaulted with such doubts; Thou mayest be a childe of light, and yet walk in darknesse, grace may be in thy heart and thou not know of it: Yea thou mayest cry out for the want of that which yet thou hast. Nothing hath been a more ordinary temptation with the children of God, then to fear themselves hypocrites and castawayes: Do not be discouraged in this thing, but wait on the Lord, and yet wait on him, he will at last cause light to shine out of darknesse. And

Secondly, Its partly for Admonition to sinfull and wicked men, who blesse themselves because they never go bowed down with such fears and doubts; They have no pangs either in life or death, all is at quiet with them, they have a good faith in Christ, and strong hopes of salvation; Oh how much better were thy estate, if it had been more troubled and shaken: Oh fear lest thy tormenting doubts and fears be reserved for thee in hell.



## S E R M. XV.

*Directions for a godly man that is afraid  
he is an Hypocrite.*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret finnes.*

**T**HE Doctrine that from these words we have begun to treat on, is,

*That even godly men are sometimes sadly afflicted under these thoughts, That there is secret and unknown sinfulness in them; and therefore whiles they justifie themselves God may condemn them; His thoughts are not as their thoughts: and that observation of the Wise man, is like a thorn in their side; Every mans way is right in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the heart, Prov. 21. 2. The grounds of this sad perplexity in a godly mans heart, we have discovered; It remaineth now, that having opened and searched the wound, we should prepare oyl or balme: Its the art of arts, to give speciall and sure receipts for so sad a disease. And*

**I.**  
Consider there  
is a two-fold  
fear.

A fear of holy  
diligence: And  
A slavish, tor-  
menting dis-  
heartning fear.

First, This will be no mean way to quiet thy soul, if thou inform thy self of a two-fold fear or trouble, the one whereof is a duty, the other sinfull: The first is a fear of holy diligence and holy sollicitude in the use of all meanes; The other is a slavish, tormenting and disheartning fear, casting the heart down, and enfeebling of it through languishing and despondent thoughts: This distinction is of excellent use in this temptation, and here he that distinguisheth well, will quickly teach

reach himself well, for the confounding of these two together puts a man into confusion, and being in the dark, eateth poyson for wholesome food.

For the first kinde of fear and trouble, viz. of diligence and carefullnesse in the use of the means, with much jealousye over our own hearts. The fear of diligence is,

Its First, *A duty commanded by God*, Shouldst thou not fear thy self and watch over thy deceitfull heart, thou wouldest be guilty of a manifest sinne, for thus the Apostle *Phil. 2. 12. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* We do not therefore blame thee, that all thy holinesse and religious profession is accompanied with a fear and trembling, but for the slavish tormenting and distracting thoughts that thou givest way to in this disposition; Know then that thus farre it is a duty, that in all the exercises of grace and religion, there should be a godly trembling upon thy heart; The Majesty of God is so infinitely great with whom thou hast to do; The weight of every duty is also exceeding great and of eternall concernment; The miscarriage is so easie and so dangerous, that an holy trembling is a most comely and condecient disposition for every godly man, especially considering that Treasure of grace he carrieth about with him, is daily laid in wait by subtle and crafty enemies, even those spirituall wickednesses in high places: Doth not the Merchant with a carefull trembling observe his Ship fraughted with all he is worth, while the way was laid by crafty Pirates? and thus the godly being in continuall danger of open violence, or secret fraud, cannot but have an holy jealousye and sollicitous trembling about himself.

2. This holy jealousye and godly trouble, is not only a duty but an excellent *corrector and qualifier of other graces*, which many times through our weaknesse and corruption, we stretch into an extremity. All graces both in their presence, and mutual cooperation, are of themselves wonderfull helpfull one to another, but such is our indiscretion and spirituall unskillfullnesse, that through an ill-managing we make them contradict one another. Thus how often while we beleeve in a promise and stablish our hearts therewith, are we ready

I.  
A Duty.

2.  
A corrector and qualifier of other graces.



to grow secure and negligent, so while we are commanded to rejoyce in the Lord, we are apt to forget these other duties of repentance, self-deniall, and humility; Now an holy trembling is the seasoning as it were of all other graces. It's the salt in the Sacrifice. Hence *Psa 2. Rejoyce with trembling,* and the Christians did walk in fear, and in the joy of the holy Ghost, *Act. 9. 31.* All that security and loosenesse, or presumption, that may be apt to breed in the godly, this doth excellently correct, this doth admirably eat out the rotten flesh; That as the Maid who heard *Peters* voice went running in with great joy, and yet great fear and amazement also; so the people of God by this godly trembling have an excellent mixture: Here is the composition of heat and moisture, of coldnesse and drinesse, and so there is no danger of miscarriage.

3.  
And a speciall  
Antidote a-  
gainst sinne.

3. This godly trembling is not onely a duty, a corrector of exorbitances, but also a speciall preserver and antidote against all future sins. Blessed is the man that feareth alwaies, *Pro. 28.* The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: Be not high-minded but fear, *Rom. 11. 20.* so that the godly trouble and fear which is upon thee, if well ordered, would be the great means to keep thee from all hypocrisie and apostacy. Hence the promise of perseverance to the godly is accomplished by working fear, *I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me, Jer. 32. 40.* There are poisonous things when corrected and ordered by art, do become of soveraign use and efficacy: Thus here, all those pangs and troubles of soul about thy hypocrisie and falshood of heart, if wisely ordered, would certainly keep thee from falling: Therefore make much and encourage all godly trembling, and jealousie about thy self. But as for the second kinde of fears, which are distracting, disponding, and tormenting of thee, These thou art to avoid and fly from, as being the immediate products of thy own black heart, and the Prince of that black darknesse in hell. For

But the slavish  
tormenting  
fears thou art  
to avoid. For

I.  
They are sins.

First, *They are sins,* and so are offending of God and endangering thy soul. All doubtings and distracting thoughts are acts of unbelief, and so contrary to that most excellent and

and choice grace of faith, and now according to that Rule, *Illa privatio est pessima, cujus habitus est optimus*, that is the worst privation whose habit is the best, and thus it is here, those doubts and tormenting fears within thee, they are contrary to faith, *Fear not but beleeve*, said our Saviour, *Luke 8. 18.* and so *μετεωρεῖν* and *διστάζειν* to be tossed up and down like a meteor, or to be a two-minded man, like one that knoweth not whether to go this way or that way, are made opposites to beleeving; and thus *Jam. 1.* the *διψυχὸς ἀνὴρ*, the double-minded man, the two-souled man is made contrary to him that beleeveeth, and such an one is said to be *unconstant in all his waies*, and compared to the wave of the Sea, that sometimes is tossed up towards heaven, sometimes swallowed up by the earth, oh then know, it's a very grievous sin, and greatly dishonouring of God to walk with such tormenting troubles; Thou art gone beyond thy bounds, thy honey is turned into gall, when once thy troubles do thus far prevail over thee.

2. *These perplexing fears and troubles, they are not only a sin but a misery*, and an heavy affliction, and wilt thou be so foolish as wilfully to keep such an heavy burthen upon thy soul? *David* how oftendid he chide his soul when it was cast down and disquieted within him? He would rub himself to good warmth and heat, after he had been in these qualms and soundings; It's made a curse by God, *to eat their bread with fear, and to drink with astonishment*: It was *Cains* mark of Gods displeasure upon him, to go up and down trembling: *Passur* that malicious Priest against *Jeremiah* was called *Magor Missabib*, *Jer. 20. 3.* Fear or trembling encompassing him round about; Oh then if these perplexing fears and troublesome thoughts be such an heavy misery and burthen, do not thou give way to them; Wilt thou at the same time be miserable and sin also? that is a twofold misery.

3. *They are not only unprofitable, but very much stopping and hindring those very good things we would have*: All fear in the immoderacy of it doth indispose and unfit for any duty: Hence the Scripture saith it makes *weak hands and feeble knees*, which are the peculiar instruments of motion and operation; Take

2.  
They are a misery.

3.  
Hinders of good things.

Take a mans hands and his feet away, he is a sluggish log, rather then a man; yet fear doth not only cut off the thumbs and toes, as was done to *Adonibezek*, but the very hands and legs; Now then, if so be these sinful dejections and troublesome thoughts do more disorder and indispose thee, put thee farther off from all the means of sincerity and truth of grace: thou art to be the more carefull to kill these young cockatrices in the very shell. It's far better with *Esther* to venture into the presence of this great King of Heaven, then to be alwaies perplexed in doubts, Whether thou shalt be received or no. *Nimis timidus est* (said *Seneca*) *qui mallet semper pendere, quam semel credere*: It's better with *Job* to say, *Though he kill me I will trust in him*, *Job* 13.15. then alwaies to be complaining, *Why hath the Lord forsaken? and will he be gracious no more?* Consider then with thy self, what furtherance and help do these dejected fears vouchsafe to thee? They do *movere*, but do they *promovere*? There is a troubling of thy soul, but doth an Angel or rather the Spirit of God come down in them, and cause healing of thy soul? This will be of some good consequence; otherwise to spend thy strength, and to weary thy self in these perplexed thoughts, and to get no spirituall advantage thereby, is willingly to keep thy self in the tearing briars, and not to be willing to get out.

4.  
And are end-  
lesse.

4. *These dejecting fears and perplexing doubts, they are endlesse.* They become like the sand on the sea-shore, you cannot tell how to number them; you heard, a *double-minded man*, who is the not beleever, *is unconstant in all his waies*. He is like the *Dove* that went out before the waters were dried up, there was no dry place to stand upon; By what reason thou entertainest one perplexing doubt, thou maist do another, and then another, and still another, till thou have no bottome. That as it is in the doctrine of faith, when a man giveth way to dispute sceptically of all things, and doth not beleeve in any thing, This man hath no center, no bottome to stand upon, he thinketh at last there is no truth, no Church, no Ordinances, yea, and no God; so it is for the practise of godlinesse, if thou beginnest to question



tion this work of grace and that work of grace in thee, fear at last lest thou fall into such deeps, that thou canst not swim out; lest thou be like the *Israelites*, that went backwards and forwards, and forwards and backwards, and so come short of *Canaan*: And this may suffice for the first particular, which hath severall branches in it to direct thee about this temptation.

But secondly, Art thou cast down lest thou be an hypocrite, and knowest not the worst by thy self? *Then consider whether thou livest in any known sinne, or in the neglect of any known duty*, and if thou canst not upon a diligent search finde any default in either of these, then know that an habituall or generall repentance for undiscovered sinnes, is all that God requireth: an expresse, formall, particular bewailing of such hidden sinnes, is not required by God. And this course you see *David* taking to quiet his soul: first he crieth out in a sad pang, *Who can understand his errors?* What then (*David?*) if none can, must we therefore perpetually torment our selves with perplexing doubts, must we therefore be alwayes kept upon the rack? No: *David* sheweth us a more excellent way, *Cleanse me from secret sinnes*. By cleansing, is meant *justification* and *pardoning*, as Expositors agree. But how can there be cleansing or pardon, where there is not repentance? and how can there be repentance of sinne, if it be secret and hidden to a mans knowledge? Yes: though there cannot be a formall, expresse repentance, yet a generall and habituall one there may be. If therefore thou hast this plain and tender preparation of heart, that if any thing be found out to be a sinne, that thou dost not yet know, thou wouldst abhorre it: and if any thing be manifested to be a duty thou art not yet convinced of, thou wouldst willingly embrace it; this is a good evidence and a sure sign for thee to gather the uprightnesse of thy heart for the main, though there may be farre more corruption in thee then ever thou didst yet finde out. Therefore *Elihu* prest a sincere heart in these words, *Job 34.31,32. I have sinned, teach thou me; and if I have offended, I will do so no more*. Here is but an *If I have sinned, If I have offended*; and yet this purposed and resolved repen-

II.

Consider whether thou livest in any known sin,  
Go.

tance for sinne, when made manifest, is enough. So then, suffer not thy self to be tossed up and down, but ask thy soul, Oh my soul, why art thou thus filled with troubles in thee, why art thou afraid thou art cast away? Is there any known grosse sinne thou doest live in, any necessary duty thou doest omit? Art thou not thus affected, That there is no secret or hidden corruption in thee, but thou wouldst rejoyce to finde out, and willingly to sacrifice it? If thou canst say thus, Behold I bring thee the glad tydings of salvation; It cannot be that that ship should perish, wherein Christ is, or that soul be damned, where Christ doth thus dwell.

## III.

Thy very jealousies and divided thoughts, argue thee to be in a good estate.

Thirdly, Thou art greatly afflicted and tempted lest thou be an hypocrite, a castaway, *Those very jealousies and divided thoughts of thine, are a plain argument to the contrary.* Every mans way naturally is clean in his own eye; If therefore thou art foul and loathsome in thy own eyes, here is more then nature here; Every man by nature is a Pygmalion, falls in love with himself: as *Laodicea, that said she was rich, and full, and wanted nothing. Rev. 3. when indeed she was naked, and miserable, and wanted all things.* Its grace and nothing but grace that complains of sinne; its sincerity and nothing else which bewaileth hypocrisie; for out of the same fountain cannot come bitter and sweet; especially when thou doest not only bewail grosse hypocrisie, but heart-hypocrisie and such secret hidden sinnes, that God only and thy own soul knoweth: Therefore its not the presence of hypocrisie, makes thee an hypocrite, no more then the presence of unbelief makes a man presently an unbeliever, but the *dominion* and *prevalency* of it. *Let not sinne reign in your mortall body.* Let not hypocrisie and guile reign in your heart. It will be there do what you can; expect no more to have a soul without some defilements, then a body without some pains and aches: If they be in thee by way of conflict and combate, thou art not a servant to them, and so not overcome by them. This very particular is enough to stay the bleeding of thy fainting soul. If I be an hypocrite, why am I afraid of it, why do I bewail it? there was never any guilefull man in the Scripture that did so.

Lastly,

Lastly, Art thou much dejected in these thoughts, thou mayest be farre worse then thou thinkest of, and so meet with heil at last, when thou didst hope for Heaven. Then set upon these duties :

Set upon these Duties.

I.

1. Betake thy self to earnest prayer, that God would discover thy self to thy self; that he would create truth in thy inward parts, that he would give thee a more plain, single and sincere heart. This fervent prayer is an antidote against all temptations: *Is any man afflicted? let him pray.* This is the key to open Heaven gates: Resolve, Lord, whatsoever I fear, whatsoever becomes of me, I will not give over praying; though I perish, I will perish praying; and be sure, this importunate incessant prayer, will bring all to a good end.

Pray earnestly to God, that he would discover thy self unto thy self, &c.

2.

2. Let this temptation make thee more watchfull, more diligent; who knowes but that God for this very end hath brought thee into all this black darknesse, so that thou mayest be more watchfull, diligent, fervent and active against thy own heart, the world and devil, then thou hast been: *What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch,* Mat. 24.42. Mat. 26.41. This is a duty again and again pressed.

Let this temptation make thee more watchfull and diligent.

3.

3. Let faith have its perfect work in applying of Christ for the sanctifying and healing of thee: If thou canst but touch him by faith, that flux of blood will cease; Its faith makes us partakers of the Olive tree, its that which bringeth Christ to dwell in thy heart. Therefore, if thou findest thy hypocrisie, thy weaknesses, and fearest every thing in thee ariseth of this trembling condition, claspe about Christ: how can there be light in thee without this Sunne? *Christ is the truth,* and if thou wouldest have truth, fly to him; it will make thee of a spirit like his, the Dove shall descend on thee; as in his heart and mouth, so neither in thine, will there be found any guile.

Act faith in Christ for sanctifying and healing of thee.

Use of Instruction to the godly, not to walk in such dejections of minde; Who may have comfort and peace, if thou have not? *The joy of the Lord is thy strength,* Do not cast thy self into deep gulfs and endlesse labyrinths: if thou canst not understand all thy errors, then pray, that God would cleanse thee from secret sinnes.



*Use 2.* To instruct us in this particular. That those (many times) who are much troubled about their estate, may be very blessed and happy: Again, Those that have much security and quietnesse of spirit, may be very cursed and miserable. Do not condemn the godly man, *who hath no rest in his bones, and who hath the arrowes of the Almighty stuck fast in him:* and again account not that man happy, *who eateth, and drinketh, and riseth up to play; and saith, to morow shall be as this day.* Oh stay till the day of death, till the day of judgement, and then take notice of the horror and condemnation that will fall upon such secure sinners: oh pray, Put me in fear O Lord, that I may know my self to be a sinner.



## S E R M. XVI.

*Shewing how hard it is to be acquainted with the Corruptions and Errors of our Hearts and Lives, and the Grounds of it.*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret finnes.*

**H**itherto we have handled that practicall Case, which is so apt to overwhelme many of Gods children, viz. That there may be, yea and is more sinfulness in their hearts then they can ever dive into, and therefore they are afraid they shall be found in the number of hypocrites. Howsoever the secure and presumptuous

presumptuous men of the world, think this a needlesse scruple, yet those that fear God, have in this very particular great divisions of heart; and we see here *David* though a great Statesman, and blessed with mighty successe in the world, hath his private retirements about this practicall doubt; and he that did not fear the face of his stoutest enemy, is afraid of the unknown corruption of his soul: the strong holds and secret stratagems of his enemies, do not so much terrifie him, as the perfidious lusts of his own soul.

This being dispatched, I proceed further to dig out more gold from this rich mine: and the next practicall Truth I shall observe is;

*That it is a very hard and difficult thing to be acquainted with the corruptions and errors of our hearts and lives.* Learned men say about naturall things, That we are ignorant of farre more things then we know, but this is much more true of the windings and crafty turnings of our hearts within us, onely in those naturall they commend a *docta ignorantia*, a learned ignorance; but comparing the errors and lusts of our souls, all ignorance is sinfull and blameworthy. Yea it is so hard to know the errors we are guilty of, that the greatest part of men, are so farre seduced, that they take contraries for contraries, black for white, darknesse for light; the worst estate which is upon the very borders of hell, for the best, as bordering upon Heaven: *Solomon* a wise man observed it, *Every mans way is right in his own eyes, but God pondereth the heart*, Prov. 16. 2. How then can we expect repentance and conversion from men? How can we look, that men with the prodigall, should arise and go to God, bewailing their sinnes against Heaven and earth, when they think all is well and right; and this was the desperate estate of *Laodicea*, *She said she was rich, and full, and wanted nothing, when indeed she was poor, and miserable, and wanted all things*, Rev. 2. A desperate estate I call this, because *nulli sunt magis desperati, quā qui minus sunt desperantes*, None are more desperate, then those who have not an holy despair in themselves, and in their own worth: It was one of *Hippocrates* his Aphorismes, *κατασθενήνεια*, an high degree of excellent health is dangerous: Even

*Observ.*

That its a difficult thing to finde out the corruptions and errors of our hearts and lives.

*contrerining*

as great calmes forego storms at sea, and earthquakes in the earth: And thus for a man to walk with high confidence, and great ease and quietnesse of soul, as if all were well with him, argueth him neer destruction; these are sudden lightnings before death: Oh what a wofull condition is it for a man at the same time to be blessing himself, and God abhorring of him, while thou art saying: Soul take thine ease; God to be commanding the devils to take thy soul, yet in this condition most live.

To open this, let us consider, whence it doth arise that its so very difficult to be acquainted with our own errors and sinnes.

I.  
Because man  
is naturally  
prone to make  
himself the  
rule of good  
and evil.

And first, *Because man is naturally prone to make himself the rule of good and evil*, that is good either in himself or others, and that is bad either in himself or others, which he approveth of or disproveth: men judge either as they are led with love or hatred, and they love and hate, even as their corrupt wills and lusts do affect them; *stat pro ratione voluntas*, and *pro iusto* and *aquo* also; now this is very great iniquity, that man who is wholly corrupted, and hath no righteousness or holinesse in him, should yet make himself the measure and rule of all righteousness. Its impossible then that ever any man should understand the errors of his wayes, as long as he mistakes in this fundamentall. He doth not go to be regulated and tried by the Word, but he takes the measure of his own heart and meeteth every thing by that. Yet this advance of our selves, as an universall standard to weigh all things by, God complaineth of as extended to himself, *Psal 50. Thou thoughtest I was such an one as thy self*. Oh horrible delusion, how can man ever come to know himself, who is apt to make a God like himself? that what he loveth, he thinks God loveth; as if God were to be after his likenesse, and not he after Gods likenesse; and truly, this sour leaven is in every mans breast, you cannot perswade him that God is angry with him, that God hateth his wayes, that God will damn him for those sinnes he liveth in: No, he *thinketh God to be such an one, like himself*; and as a man that looks through red or green glasse, thinks ever object is of that colour the glasse



glasse is : so it is here, They think every thing in God, to be according to what is in them ; and hence also all the Scripture they make to be a book after their own heart ; they put what glosse and interpretation they will upon it, and thus by it they encourage themselves in their wicked way : Therefore till this rotten flesh be eaten out, never expect that a man should be healed of his dangerous wounds.

2. Therefore its hard to be acquainted With all the errors of his heart because there are the first motions of sinne, which rise up in our souls anteccedently to our own reason, and Will, and consent many times, and therefore like the motes in the aire, are very indiscernable. These motions which may be called indeliberate, and in some sense involuntary, the Schoolmen call *motus primi primi* ; The first products and immediate issues of the soul, which arise like a multitude of grasshoppers upon the heart ; that as some Philosophers say, *Objecta semper radiant*, objects do alwayes irradiate species, which yet are not discernable : so the heart of a man is never quiet, but alwayes in motions, and those immoderate and sinfull for the most part : As the naturall man is alwayes in motion, so the heart of a man spiritually considered, is alwayes in agitation ; Its a mill alwayes grinding. Now those thoughts and motions, which are so sudden, indeliberate, and before or against our consent, who can reckon up these any more then the sand of the sea shore ! The Papists indeed deny they are finnes, unlesse consented unto ; they grant them to be the effects of sinne, and sometimes causes of sinne, but not finnes themselves : According to them they are like the money put into *Josephs* brethrens sacks, they were much troubled at it, but because it came there without their knowledge or consent, it was not their sinne ; thus they speak of these first motions and stirrings of heart : But *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 7.* teacheth other divinity, bewailing and groaning under such motions, though not consented to lye in him, and he calls them finnes very often in that Chapter, and that finnes formally, because contrary to the holy and pure Law of God, and finnes that were to be mortified and crucified ; so then, if those stirrings and motions of heart, which arise so many thousands in a moment almost, are for

2.  
Because in the heart are the first motions of sinne.

for the most part all of them finnes (for if the fountain be polluted, the streams must be :) Who may not cry out with *David*, O Lord, I cannot understand my errors!

3.  
Because of the  
sinfull and in-  
ordinate self-  
love which ad-  
hereth to every  
man.

3. *Its hard to know and to be acquainted with all our finnes, because of that sinfull and immoderate self-love, which adhereth to every man, as Ivy to the tree, never leaving it, till it hath consumed and damned a man.* This self-love covereth a multitude of finnes, in an evil sense, as compassionate love doth in a good sense: The Apostle makes self-love, the first in the front of that army of rebellious finnes against God, *There shall come dangerous times, men shall be lovers of themselves,* 2 Tim. 3. 2. Therefore our Saviour layeth it down as a fundamentall qualification to his Disciple, *He must deny himself,* Mark. 8. 34. *yea he must lose himself,* Now a mans judgement, affections, aimes, interest, will and profit, these are all part of that self a man must deny. Self-love hath its dreams as well as carnall love, faining to it self such goodnesse, and such happiness as can be desired, but (alas) both they and their goodnesse are but painted sepulchers; How then should that man believe any evil by himself, who is perswaded only of good in himself? To such as these are, the ministry though never so powerfull, is most unprofitable, because their self-love hinders them from application of all those threatnings and curings in the Law, which do indeed belong to them; this is the brazen wall that beatech back the strongest arrow taken out of Gods quiver; self-love hath quite besotted him, he seeth, he thinketh, he loveth, nothing but himself; even as that *Antipheron Aristotle* speaks of, who by weaknesse of his eyes, had the reflexion of himself in the aire, as others have upon a looking-glasse, so that all the day long, still he saw himself. If therefore thou wouldst ever come to know how vile and loathsome thou art, root out that self-love, as the great juggler that casts a mist before thy eyes.

4.  
Heresies and  
such sins as are  
chiefly seated  
in the head  
and under-

4. *Those finnes which are Idolatries and heresies, and all such as are seated chiefly in the understanding, these are hardly discovered: The eye that seeth all other things, yet doth not see it self, how much lesse when its ill affected with humours?* How can a man understand his errors, when his errors are his understanding?

understanding? and therefore in this respect, heresies and errors, and all intellectuall finnes, are worse then grosse, notorious finnes (whatsoever may be said in other respects) viz. their cure is more difficult; its farre more difficult to convince such a man though erring damnably, then a present ungodly man; and the reason is, because *his eye is dark, and then the whole body must be very dark. Hastenus ignorantiam meam ignoravi*, said *Seneca*; Hitherto I was ignorant of my ignorance; and truly so may all those say, who are led aside by the errors of the ungodly, Hitherto I was ignorant of the blasphemy, of the Idolatry, of the damnable errors I was seduced by. Ecclesiasticall History telleth us of *Actius* surnamed the wicked, because of his many blasphemous and arrogant opinions, that this was usually his proud saying, *He knew what God was; yea he knew God as well as he knew himself*: Oh horrible impudence, its an argument he neither knew God or himself: So that the Counsell which Christ gave the Church, is admirably necessary for all sorts of persons, *To buy eye-salve*, that their understandings being enlightened, and mindes transformed, they may *know the good and perfect Will of God*. Oh pray to God, that thou mayest be acquainted with every false way, that thy feet do wander in.

5. *Its hard to understand our errors, because of earthly and worldly profit, which many times come to us by our finnes.* Let our Saviour speak in never so convincing a manner to the Pharisees, yet they being covetous will mock and deride him, *Luk 16.14*. It was not for their earthly profit and outward greatnesse to believe those things Christ preached: and thus though the Ministers of the Gospel charme never so wisely to the Pope of *Rome* and his devoted party, they cannot but stop their ears, for its to throw down his worldly advantages: As therefore any dust blown into the eyes, doth presently hinder the sight, so any earthly or worldly consideration doth easily turn a mans judgement. This clay the world puts upon our eyes, will not like that of our Saviours, help us to sight, but rather put it cleer out: Love to a mans profit and inordinate desire of gain, will make a man commit sad and soul-wasting finnes, and yet for the while at lest, the

standing, are very hardly discovered to a mans self.

5. Its hard to understand our error, because of earthly profit.



6.  
And the pleasures and delights of sinne.

party offending take no notice of them.

6. *As earthly profits, so pleasures and the delight of sinne, they do wonderfully bribe the judgement; and its very hard to persuade a man, that those things wherein his desires and pleasures are sated, they are finnes; a man will dispute much, and argue very many fair pretences, ere the pleasures of sinne and himself shall part so easie: Like the mastie dog, they have tasted of the sweetnesse of the blood, and you may as soon kill them as separate them: Its hard keeping in the candle, when damps and moist vapours do once begin to rise where men are digging; and its no lesse difficult to keep up the lamp of a mans faith and spirituall wisdom, when these foggy vapours, these brutish pleasures of sinne do once ascend up. To understand our errors, doth require reflexion upon our acts; now a beast cannot reflect upon its acts, it doth not know it seeth or it smells; and the more beastly any finnes are, the more devoid they make us of all understanding: Therefore the Scripture saith, *Wine and women take away the heart, Hose 4. 11.* remove all wisdom and knowledge from a man.*

7.  
Also it proceeds from custom and universality in a way of sinne,

7. *Education, custom and universality in any way of sinne, doth greatly hinder a man from understanding his errors: What made the Idolaters, what makes all superstitious and erroneous men, to account all their idolatry and corruption of worship no sinne? a great cause of this is education and universality; the commonnesse of a sinne seems to be argument good enough to justify it: Its asserted by many learned men, that the polygamy of the Patriarchs and others in the old Testament was a sinne, because directly against the first institution of marriage, *They two shall be one flesh*: But if this be so, then the great doubt is, Why the godly men who had more wives then one, did not repent of this sinne, why did they not bewail it? and its answered; It was the sinne of the age and the time, even all through custom had fallen into it, and so they did not understand their errors though very foul.*

8.  
From Satans delusions.

8. *The devil in some part prevailing over the godly, doth many times so delude them, that even fouler finnes are not understood by them: We see in Adam and Eve, though created with perfect*

fect knowledge, yet the devil did insinuate himself; and it hath exercised Divines to shew wherein the error or sinne of Adam did begin, whether in his will or understanding; so then, if he could delude him, no marvell if Satan now by his subtile methods and crafty insinuations he hath, can do as his instruments: juglers and wizards do raise up apparitions and the shew of things, for the things themselves.

9. *Its hard to understand our errors, because of the multitude of them:* They are so great, the number of them so vast, that they cannot remember all, or take notice of all; and this may be a great part of Davids meaning, *Who can understand?* Who can remember, know and take notice of them, they are such a numberlesse number as we say! and therefore David in other places compareth them to the hairs of his head. Are Davids sinnes so many, and are thine lesse? Oh this meditation should even swallow us up with fear and trembling: There are such armies, such companies of lusts alwayes arising from me, that I am a very burden and terror to my self.

9.  
Because of the multitude of them.

Lastly, *Its hard to understand, as the quality, so the quantity of them,* all the circumstances that do aggravate them: Oh shouldst thou sit down and aggravate every sinne thou hast committed from all the circumstances of it, even the least sin will at last arise to such a greatnesse, that it will overwhelm.

II.  
Because of the quality of them.

Use of Admonition, Not to be high-minded, or presumptuously to justifie thy self: for doth a David, who studieth the Law of God day and night, that often prayeth to God, that he would search and try his heart, doth he yet complain that he knowes his sinnes but in part, that there is much corruption kept secret from him? With what greater grief then, and sadder fears shouldst thou utter this complaint, *Who can understand his errors?* Oh take heed of this self-love, this self-flattery, that wilt see nothing, and hear of nothing in thy self, but what is good and laudable. Well, know for all thy hidings and coverings, the day is coming, when all hidden things of the heart shall be manifested.



## S E C T. IV.

## Of Morall and Practicall Errors.

## S E R M. XVII.

*That all Sinnes and transgressions are  
damnable ~~Heresies~~. Errors*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from se-  
cret finnes.*



He next practicall and wholesome Truth we shall consider and treat of, is from the Title and name which *David* giveth to sinne; He calls sinnes *Errors*: This is a metaphor from the bodily motion, when a mans foot steps awry out of the plain way into some dangerous pit; or from those vagabonds, who wander up and down from place to place, having no settled place; and truly such a wandering rover is every wicked man; He hath no settled foundation for any comfort or peace, but shifteth up and down, and if he can get some present ease, he careth for no more, never looking to the future. The expressing of sinne under the notion of *error*, doth very well answer the greek words for sinne, especially those two, *αμαρτια* and *παραβασις*, *αμαρτια* is properly in the Archer when he misseth the mark he shoots at; and to this also the Hebrew



Hebrew word answereth, and *παρελασις* which signifieth as a Critick noteth, not so much a going beyond the precept, as a carelesse and negligent passing by, not regarding bounds that are set. As the Scripture doth here call them errors, so all sinnes are called, *Heb. 9.7. ἀγνοήματα*; The High-Priest offered once a year for the errors or ignorance of the people; so that there is no man who committeth any sinne, but in that respect he doth grievously and dangerously erre, and that not in outward worldly matters, but in eternall and everlasting concernments.

Doct. *That all sinnes and transgressions, they are the dangerous and damnable errors of men.* Though they rejoyce in their pleasures and profits, and condemn the generation of the godly for unwise and foolish men, who will not *runne into the same exaspe of riot* as they do, yet indeed they are only in an error; and therefore the Scripture doth so often call wicked men *fools*, and that rich glutton, who had all the good things of this life, at last he is called *a fool*, and for his short pleasures is thrown into eternall torments.

Doct.

All Sinnes are damnable Errors.

To open this Point, consider *that our errors, which are also sinnes, be of two sorts*; some are meerly intellectuall in our understanding, whereby we judge falshood for truth, and truth for falshood: others are morall and practicall, whereby in our actions we turn aside from the true and right rule: now the most common application of the word *error*, with us, is to sinnes of the first kinde: we in a strict sense do for the most part call them errors, which are corrupt opinions in the understanding; but the Scripture doth very frequently apply it to practicall sinnes, and to the iniquity of our wayes; so that we are not only to cry down errors of judgement, but errors of mens lives; Not only the opinion of Free-will, of universall Redemption, but thy drunkennesse, thy swearing, &c. these are errors also: and truly he that is upright in heart, and desireth to walk impartially, doth mourn for the toleration and licentiousnesse of both these kindes of errors; It grieveth him, that the Scripture way is not taken, to stop the course both of errors of judgement, and also errors of mens conversation.

Errors are of two sorts.

2. Consider that there is no man sinnes, but he hath some kinde of error, or ignorance in his understanding at that time, as to speak more according to School Divinity; There are three kindes of defect in the understanding, and one of these is alwayes present when a man doth sinne, insomuch that its a received opinion, that *omnis peccans, est ignorans*, every sinner hath ignorance in his minde; yea *Socrates* and others went so farre, as to say, that *virtus* was nothing but *scientia*, virtue was knowledge; and they called no man *doctus vir*, but who was a good man: thus they thought, that every man did sinne for want of knowledge: But *Aristotle* did well shew the falshood of this, and yet grants also some defect of the minde, in every one that sinneth:

First, *Therefore there is error*, and that is properly an act of the judgement, when we do judge such things lawfully to be done as are unlawfull, such things good, as are very bad: now this is not in all sinne, for how many do judge their adulteries, their voluptuous pleasures, and unjust dealings, to be sinfull and against Gods word! yea they many times are troubled about them, and bewail them bitterly, though they cannot overcome them: This error therefore of judgement is most commonly seen in doctrinall Points, yea and sometimes men are given up to such corrupt judgements, that they do plead for and maintain such sinnes as are against the very light of nature, and the common rules of righteousness acknowledged by all men: This I acknowledge is an heavy judgement, when men are delivered up to beleeve a lye: that have eyes but cannot see, and hearts but cannot understand; These men have upon their hearts that *atra nubes*, the black dark cloud the Poet speaks of: It was the Jews case, who had a vail upon their hearts,

No mans sins  
but from error  
or ignorance.

Secondly, *There is ignorance*, when we do not know the matter that is to be done, and that is either grosse, which doth wholly darken a mans understanding, so that a man hath his eyes quite put out, or else its affected ignorance, when a man doth wilfully affect and desire ignorance, that so he may not know what he ought to do; as those that did stop their ears, that they might not hear the charmer, though he charmed never so wisely.

wisely. The Schoolmen speak of an invincible ignorance, which they say, doth wholly excuse from sinne; which is then, when a man though he should use all his endeavour and power, yet he were not able to remove it: but according to Scripture, even he that *doth not know his Masters Will, shall be beaten*, though he that *knew it, and did it not, shall have greater stripes*, Luk. 12. 47. Its not ignorance or involuntariness that makes a sinne, but the *τὸ αἰσῶν* the transgression of a Law; if therefore it be an ignorance of what we ought to know, whether it be vincible or invincible, its all one, its our sinne that we do not know it; indeed a meer nesciency of many things we are not bound to know is no sinne, for that was in Adam, while in estate of holiness, and is still in the very Angels, because they do not know all things; but ignorance of what we ought to know is alwayes a sinne.

Now this ignorance one way or other, is for the most part in every sinner; His understanding is destitute of that knowledge, whereby he might be guided to better wayes; *Father forgive them for they know not what they do*, Luk. 23. 34. especially there is notice to be taken of two more kinds of knowledge in matter of sinning: There is a knowledge in the generall, or a bare speculative knowledge, and there is a particular practicall knowledge *pro hic & nunc*, whereby we know what is to be done by us at this time: Now there are thousands of sinners, that in the generall know they ought not to do what they do; They have a bare speculative judgement, condemning those wayes they live in; but then for the particular, effectual application of their knowledge, to make them reform, that they want. Therefore the Scripture speaks of wicked men, as those that *know not God, and have no understanding at all*, because the knowledge they have is only generall, it doth not put them upon practise, which is the end of all knowledge in divinity, and that which doth not attain its end, is as good as nothing at all. Again, *There is another distinction of knowledge*, its either *habitual* or *actuell*; *Habitual* is, when a man hath the principle of knowledge and understanding within him; *Actuell* is, when a man puts it forth into its proper use: Now there are many who have  
*habitual*



*habitual* knowledge, but want *actual*; as a man in a dream, or in drunkenness, or in madness, these have the principles of knowledge within them, but there is an obstruction of the use of this knowledge; and most wicked men are thus asleep in their sinnes, they are thus drunken with their lusts: You wonder, Oh how can such a man, that knowes such wayes to be sinnes, that readeth the Scripture, that heareth so much, oh how can he ever be found committing such and such sins against God! Wonder not, for he is in a sleep in a drunkenness, in a *delirium* or mad fit, he is out of his wits for that time; for its said of the Prodigall, upon his repentance, that *he came to himself*; and the Scripture word of admonition is excellent, *vs deoia*, as much as putting a minde and reason into a man again; so that you see even those men who have great knowledge, yet do erre while they sinne, because they want that *particular actual* knowledge, which would not only be *lux* but *calor* also in their hearts; not light only, but heat also. And thus much for the second ground of all mens sinnes.

*The third and last, is inconsideration*, or want of diligent and stedfast attendance unto what we do, and truly where there is a cleer judgement, and knowledge sufficient, yet men are hurried away through the deceitfullness of sinne, because they do not seriously and diligently consider those many arguments, which might make them keep off from all iniquity. The Scripture layeth them down for the foundation of mens transgressions, and so their calamities. *Oh consider this, all ye that forget God*, Psal. 50. And the Apostle to Timothy, 2 Tim. 2.7. *Consider what I say*. In Ezekiel, the first step to a wicked mans conversion is, *if he consider and turn from his evil way*: So that inconstancy, or inconsideration is that which throwes a man into ruine; yea sinne in Adam and Eve could come no other way but by *inadvertency*, for there was no blindness in their judgement, or crookedness in their will, only a *mutability*. Thus if we go to the head from whence all the muddy streams of impiety do flow, it will be one of these three; either error, ignorance, or *inconsideration*; but because this may be too scholasticall a dispute about sinne,

*inadvertency*

sinne, we shall therefore more popularly shew, wherein sinnes are truly called errors or wandrings. And

First, *Because all transgressions do erre and deviate from their rule, which is the Law and word of God.* All humane actions, every thing we do, ought to be conformable to a rule, and that rule is Gods word. Hence *David* so often commends it, *for a light and lamp to his feet*, That by it, he was forewarned from sinne; that even a young man whose lusts are most potent in him, may yet cleanse his way by attending thereto: *Psal. 119.* As many as walk by this rule, saith the Apostle, *Gal. 3.12.* is exactly and methodically to follow it; Peace be upon them; wherefore the Apostle *John*, giving a definition of sinne, makes the very formall nature of it, to be against the Law of God, and where there is no Law, there can be no sinne, *1 Job. 3.4.* If then you ask, Why is any sinne an error? the answer is easie, it swerves from the rule, from Gods word, to which in all things we should conform: Oh that men would consider this, let your life be a Scripture life, your thoughts Scripture thoughts: you are not to live as you list, nor as others do, nor according to your own lusts, but according to this rule.

Secondly, Our sinnes are errors, not only because they deviate from the rule, but also *because they carry a man out of the right way.* Every mans course of actions, the Scripture directs to call a way; Now we are told of two wayes, a narrow and a streight way, and a broad way, which leadeth to death, *Matth. 7.* In this broad way all wicked men do wander, they are clean out of the way; Well then may we call thy lusts and thy sinnes errors, because thou art carried wholly out of the way. Thou thinkest thou art going to happiness, that thou art in the ready way to life, but all this while, thou art a wanderer: Here thou mayest truly say, A Lyon, even the roaring Lyon that seeks to destroy thee, is in the way. *Paul* would not passe by that way where spies were laid in wait to kill him; but thou fool, and hardened sinner, dost venture presumptuously in those pathes where death and damnation are sure to surprize thee. The Poet accounted it civility, *comiter monstrare viam*, to shew the right way

Reasons.

1.

They deviate from the Rule.

2.

They carry a man out of the right way.

to the wandering passenger; but we are not only out of the way through sinne, but we are angry at all those, who would teach us a better way: We think they are our enemies that cry aloud to us, O go not in that dangerous way, thou wilt at last fall into the bottomlesse pit. Take heed thy whole life be not a constant error.

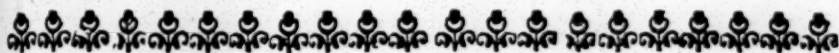
3.  
In respect of  
the end which  
we ought to  
aim at.

Thirdly, *Sinnes are errors in respect of the end which we ought to aime at, and that is true blessednesse and happinesse: avarice*, is the missing of the mark: Happinesse is that which all aim at; a man cannot but desire it: The rich man would be happy by his riches, the great man happy by his greatnesse, only here is the great error, men place happinesse there where it cannot be found, and so embrace a shadow for a substance: How blinded then and wofully deluded are all wicked men? what is or ought to be the chief end of all men? Wouldst thou not be happy when thou diest? Yes, saith every man, with all his heart: How cometh it then about, that thou livest in thy sinnes? will not these certainly deprive thee of all peace and happinesse? doth not the Scripture in every page almost, threaten eternall death and damnation to the impenitent sinners? Oh then delude not thy self with vain hopes; thou wilt at last finde all thy sinnes to be damnable errors, that have deprived thee of all that happinesse and blessednesse thou didst look for: For a man to be disappointed of that end for which he was made, and to which a mans continuall care and study should be, is unspeakable misery. Though men never come to be sensible of this, till they are deprived of it, and cast into hell; then they cry out, Oh we fools and mad men, how have we erred and strayed from our happinesse!

The other Particulars wherein sinnes are errors, I put off to the next, and conclude with an Use of Terror to wicked men, that applaud and justifie themselves in their evil wayes, that will not be convinced, that such wayes which bring them in so much profit and pleasure, deserve the name of errors; for what, shall Gods word stand or thine? shall his thoughts or thine prove true? These thy sinnes are thy errors: Alas, poor sinner, that is made drunk or mad with his sinnes, he knoweth not what he doeth, what he sayeth; or if he do in the generall,



rall, yet in the particular he doeth not. Oh then be awakned out of thy errors, never think to get that pleasure or comfort by sinne thou hopest for ; it may be sweet in the mouth, but it will be gravell in the belly.



## S E R M. XVIII.

*That all Sinnes are damnable Errors,  
further demonstrated, with some Helps  
against Sinne.*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors ? cleanse thou me from secret  
sinnes.*

**W**E are still improving this Doctrine, *That sinnes and transgressions are dangerous errors.* We shall add further demonstrations of this, that so no wicked man may applaud or blesse himself in his way, but obtaining spirituall eye-salve, and seeing all his wandrings from God and happiness, may speedily arise and turn unto God.

The first thing I shall at this time pitch upon to declare this truth, That sinne is an error, shall be *from that deordination which is in the nature of every sinne in respect of man as he is a reasonable creature.* Take man as placed in an higher sphere then the beasts of the field, and endued with reason ; There is nothing so much against reason as sinne ; by reason, I mean sound rectified reason guided by the word of God, for though reason be the eye of the soul, yet as the eye can see nothing without light, so neither is our reasonable faculty able to discover between good and bad without Gods word. But

4.

Sin is against Reason.

take a man in this manner qualified with reason, there is nothing so contrary and repugnant to it as sinne; every time a man commits sinne, his soul faileth in its proper operations: As the eye when diseased is hindered in seeing, the leg when lame in walking, or the whole body when there is a dissonancy or dissolving of the good temperament of the humours causeth a disease: so it is with a mans understanding; Is he proud, earthly, lustfull? these are unnaturall, irrationall actions, thou art not a man: Therefore virtue is called *a virtus*, Its a manly rationall thing to avoid any sinne; so that as a disease is said to be *præter naturam*, besides the sound and good nature of the bodily constitution hindring it in its operations; so sinne, though otherwise connaturall to us, being from the very birth polluted, yet its preternaturall, if you do regard the true and right constitution of man, being made a reasonable creature: yea sinne is not only a disease but a monster; for as a monster is the aberration of nature in her naturall operations, by some impediments intervening; so the soul of man, which ought to do only that which is according to true prudence and the word of God, being hindered, produceth a monster; so that thy pride, thy malice, thy oathes, thy wantonnesse, are so many ugly and deformed monsters: *James 1.15.* the Apostle alludeth to this exposition, making the understanding of a man to be like a womb, and lust to be the seed or spawne, and then at last actuall sinne is brought forth, as a monster begotten of a mans corrupt will, and the devil together. Oh then, let this make thee to abhorre all sinne, its the monster of the soul. The Centaurs and other divers shapen monsters spoken of by Poets, was to represent wicked men.

5.  
It perverts the  
Harmony of  
the Soul.

2. As sinne is an error, because a dead notion of the understanding in its proper operations; so its an error, *because its a perverting and disorderly confounding of the sweet harmony and subordination that ought to be among the powers and faculties of the souls themselves, and their due and proper objects which they tend unto:* for now in the soul as in the Heavens, the upper spheres carry away the lower in their motions, though contrary to their inclinations; so the understanding and the will,

will, which are as the King and Councell, in a mans estate, should rule and command the affections and all other inferior stirrings of the soul; but when a man sinneth, then it is as if the earth should guide the Heavens, the tayl the head, servants ride and Princes go on foot: wonder not then that sinne is called an error, for it disorders all the subordination or order that is in the soul, for either the will is oppressed by the affections, or the understanding by the phancy, and so against all order, the seeing are led by the blinde. Again, As the harmony among the powers of the soul is disordered, so the objects are confounded; for in all sinne the creature is preferred before the Creator, the drop of the creature before the ocean of the Creator: Oh what error is this! Who can bewail this folly, that thou shouldst take an empty cistern before a fountain, that thou shouldst accept of meer husks before the heavenly manna? What did God make thee and give thee a soul of such capacious desires, only for the comfort that is in a creature? can this be the center of thy motion? *David* could not do so, for God was his portion, and he had nothing in Heaven or earth but him.

3. *Sinnes are errors, because they make a man restless, giving him no true content or satisfaction at all: Therefore the Scripture speaking of wickednesse saith, they add drunkennesse to thirst, Deut. 29. 19.* That as the drunkard by his excesse is made more dry, and his drought makes him drink the more, then there is no stop; so it is with men, especially when accustomed to sinne, they wander farther and farther in this wilderness; they long to satisfie such a lust, and then another, and when these are accomplished, still they are desiring further and further impieties: Oh then do but lay this to heart; Is not thy covetousnesse, thy uncleannesse great errors? Dost thou not finde that like the grave, they still swallow up all, and yet say Its not enough; doth not all sinne leave an hydropicall thirst, or an unsatisfied *Bulimus* upon thee, that thou canst not give over: certainly this is a great error and vanity.

But lastly and principally, *Sinne is an error, because its all wayes committed for want of consideration: No man that sins doth*

6.  
They give no satisfaction to the soul.

7.  
Its alwaies  
waile  
dev



doth duly and deeply consider what he doth ; he may have some transient apprehensions, but that doth not deserve the name of consideration, for that is called so from *Sydrus*, which is more then a bare simple *stella* ; Its not *stella*, but such a conjunction of Starres, and that causeth great influence ( they say ) in inferior things ; so to consider, is not barely to apprehend such a thing, but to conjoyn many motives and arguments together, not leaving till it doth produce some good ; The Hebrew phrase is, to lay a thing upon our hearts, or to keep and hide such a thing in our hearts, as the woman did the leaven in her meal, letting it alone, till its virtue was diffused all over : Its the birds constant sitting upon her eggs, that breeds young ones ; so the arguments thou art to consider on against sinne, must never be taken off from thy heart, let them morning and evening be upon thee ; This fire will not kindle such green wood, unlesse there be constant blowing.

Now I shall select some of the most powerfull and efficacious arguments against sinne, that the sinner doth not consider of. As

I.  
The sinner  
considers not  
the majesty  
of God.

1. *The majesty, greatnesse and power of that God, whom he doth offend by every sinne.* If the wrath of an earthly King be like the roaring of a lyon, how unspeakable is the anger of an infinite God ! Did therefore every sinner but consider the omniscience, greatnesse and power of God, he would say to every soliciting lust, as *Joseph* to his enticing Mistris, *How can I do this and sinne against God ?* Our Saviour he tells his Disciples, whom they should fear, even him, *that is able to destroy soul and body in hell*, Luk. 12. 5. For want of this consideration, wicked men are said to forget God, not to know, not to have him before their eyes, not to have him in their thoughts. The Heathens admonition to him that desired to abstain from any dishonest way, was, to imagin some grave, rigid man as *Cato* before his eyes ; but the Scripture directs us, to *walk before God, and so we shall be perfect or sincere.* Think then with thy self, Before whom do I commit this lewdnesse ? Is not Gods sparkling, revengefull eye upon me, I would be afraid man should see me, and yet man cannot damne me:  
man

man cannot fill the heart with horror and gall as the great God can: break off then thy ungodly wayes, and consider what thou doest: against whom is all this evil committed? Its not an Idoll God, that having eyes seeth not, or hands smite not; but that God, whose wrath, if kindled though but a little, its like a consuming fire, and thou as stubble before it.

2. *The sinner doth erre, in not considering, what he himself is, who doth sinne; a poor mortal wretch, that hath no assurance of his life, for an hour, for a moment.* Why then wilt thou venture so desperately for such sinfull profit, and such sintull pleasures, when it may be God will strike thee dead, and send thee to hell while these quales are in thy mouth; while thou art rowling the sweetnesse of thy lusts in thy mouth, thou mayest hear that voice, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be taken away from thee.* Oh its a wonder, when there is nothing more certain and obvious then our mortality, that we should not consider of it more, that it should not antidote against sinne: *O ye mortall men, how long will ye love vanity, Psal. 4.* Oh thou mortall tongue, how long wilt thou delight in cursing and swearing? Thou mortall body, how long wilt thou be polluted with brutish lusts? Did you remember your lives are but vapours, that you passe away as a shadow, that your glasse may be running the last crumme, Oh how wouldst thou then cry out, I am a dying man, let me alone, I dare not sinne. It was *Nyssens* observation, *Post Genesin, sequitur Exodus*; immediately after our generation or being, there is our departing out of the world; now this consideration of mortality, might be very effectuell, especially with the great, rich, and mighty men of the world, for its hard for them to remember they are dust and ashes: But as your Letters to great men, though they have the superscribed Titles of Honourable, great and mighty, yet within, there is nothing but a little black ink and sand-dust; so it is, even with the highest men in the world, though they have never such pompous Titles, yet they are nothing but a little black blood and a skin of dust covering them: It was a proud and arrogant fact of *Constantinus* the Arrian

2.  
Nor what he himself is.

Arrian Emperour, after his great victory over *Magentius* the Tyrant in armes against him : He would needs have them stile him, not his Imperiall Majesty, but his Eternity ; they did beseech his Eternity : And the Arrian flatterers, that would not grant Eternity to Christ the Son of God, yet would attribute that title to him ; but this Eternity of *Constantinus* did quickly come to an end, so vain are all mortall things : Oh then pray with the Psalmist, that God would teach thee to number thy dayes, and this will make thee apply thy heart to wisdom.

3.  
Nor the etern-  
ity of Tor-  
ment.

3. *The sinner doth not deeply consider the eternity of torment and misery which must be for those short pleasures of sinne ;* for if he did weigh this in his heart, we would think even a legion of devils could not tempt him to the least sinne. Hence it is the Scripture doth so often presse that argument of unquenchable fire, and wormes alwayes gnawing, and everlasting chains of darknesse ; now this bitter pill swallowed down, would immediately cure us ; he that hath sinned, would do so no more : *Oh that they were wise,* said God, *that they would understand their latter end,* Deut. 32. 29. As the godly do comfortably endure these afflictions as light and momentany, because of that everlasting weight of glory, so the sinner would if duly considering of it, throw away those light and short pleasures of sinne, because of the eternall weight of misery and torment that is coming upon them : Go then and retire thy self, think sad and serious thoughts : Oh what is Eternity ! eternall torments, eternall horrors ! No end, no evasion, after thousands and thousands of years, still as farre from ending as at first ! and will not such lively thoughts as these, make thee immediately leave all thy sinnes and follow Christ. But who doth believe or consider these things, no, not while we are preaching of this usefull and necessary consideration !

4.  
Nor Christ.

4. This consideration may pour coals of fire upon our heads, and melt an hardest heart, which is fixed upon Christ, in reference to our sinnes. And two things we may observe from Christ, which may command us to stand still, and not step a step further in sinnes way. As



I.

The infinite displeasure of God.

1. *The infinite displeasure of God against sinne, who thus poured out his anger upon his own Sonne, while he stood surety for our sinnes: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

This was the bitter cup he was to drink for our sakes: All the pains of his body, and sufferings in his soul, were not for his own sinnes, for he was the innocent Lamb without any blemish, but for our iniquities, he laid our iniquities upon him, *Isa. 53.* They met together in him, as mighty streams of water, which carry down all before them, so the word signifieth: Now who can finde in his heart to sinne, when he shall behold God so terrible against it when its only charged upon Christ as a surety?

2.

The love of Christ.

2. *The other consideration is the Love of Christ; He endured all this wrath and agony, not only to cleanse us from the guilt of sinne, but also the filth of it, that he might redeem to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2.* Now this love of Christ Paul found it did constrain him, *1 Cor. 5. 14.* as the word signifieth; like as when any had the spirit of prophesie come upon them, they had violence within, and could not but speak. Thus the Love of Christ would be like fire in thy bones, and as *calor* doth segregate heterogeneous things, so love would separate thee from thy sinnes as inconsistent with God: The love of Christ crucified, shed abroad in our hearts, would easily, kindly and speedily loosen us from all sinne, and all the duties and service we should do would be with gladnesse and cheerfulness of heart. *In eo quod amatur, aut non laboratur, aut labor amatur;* There is no labour in love, or if there be, the labour is loved: Some have thought that the consideration of the love of God in Christ, is only necessary to part a man from his sinnes; that all other considerations are needlesse, but this would be to charge the Scripture with superfluities, that useth many other besides it.

Lastly, *We erre in sinne, not considering this, that though every man loves the reall practise of sinne, yet he cannot endure the name of it put upon him:* This consideration should greatly make against sinne. Thou delightest in the reall practise of adultery, drunkennesse, &c. yet thou canst not endure any should say thou art an adulterer, or a drunkard: Oh inconsiderate

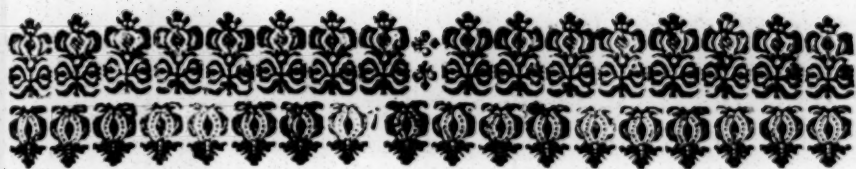
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foolish

foolish man, Dost thou love the thing, and canst not abide the name? On the other side it makes for the excellency of grace, that though men care not for the practise of it, yet they love the name: They rejoyce to hear men give them the Titles of such vertues, but if the name be so good or bad, why are not the things themselves much more?

*Use.*

*Use* of Instruction: Are sinnes errors? then see the necessity of Repentance; The greek word is more emphaticall, *μετανοία*, an after-minde, or an after-understanding; as also, hereby we see the necessity of illumination, and the spirituall opening of our blinde eyes. All the world cannot convince thee in a saving manner of these damnable wandrings, till the Spirit of God convince: Oh that men should live and walk in these errors, and yet think all is well; or if they have some transient apprehensions of the evilnesse of them, yet for all that frequently commit them: As those who have sore eyes, though they know rubbing of them, makes them worse, yet they cannot keep their fingers off. What a wretched thing is it, to say, I see and approve better things, though I do worse: Intreat God to give thee a wise understanding heart, thou art not wise till thou repent;



# SECT. V.

## The Great Exalters of Grace.

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### SERM. XIX.

*Humbled pardoned Sinners, the great Exalters of Grace.*

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PSAL. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret finnes.*

THE first part of this Text, which is *Dauids* sad expostulation, hath been fully improved. We come to the second, which is a vehement postulation, or ardent Petition occasioned by the complaint, *Cleanse thou me from secret finnes.*

Wherein observe the mercy prayed for, and the object about which it is conversant. The mercy prayed for is, cleansing; the object, secret finnes.

To *cleanse*, hath for our purpose a two-fold signification; First, that which is more noble, principall, and more ordinary, and that is, to pardon, forgive, or remit sinne, so that it is the same with covering of sinne, or not imputing sinne; Thus 1 Joh. I. The blood of Christ is said to cleanse us from all sinne:



As *David*, *Psal.* 51. doth much presse this phrase, to *wash* him so, as that he may be *whiter then snow*, and this is the most common acception of the word; and it is an allusion to those typicall washings and cleansings which were amongst the *Jews*, as the Apostle *Heb.* 9. doth interpret, which did prefigure the blood of Christ washing away our guilt; especially this cleansing, or to be pronounced clean, was used of the leprous person, when made whole; so that this very expression *cleanse*, doth denote, that sinne was most abominable and loathsome in Gods pure eyes, and also to  *Davids* feeling and apprehension; Even as *Job* was a burden to himself, when he sate upou the dunghill with those bodily ulcers upon him, abhorring himself, and even weary of his life.

The second use of the word *cleanse*, in the Scripture, is for *Sanctification*, and reforming of our hearts and lives from sin; Thus *Esay* to the *Jews*, *Isa.* 1. *Wash ye, make ye clean, how long shall vain thoughts lodge in you?* 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of flesh and spirit.* Now it may be in some places both these significations may be intended, for one is subordinate and necessarily coherent with the other; and if we should in this petition comprehend both, we should not greatly erre, so that pardoning of sinne be the principall and main. The words thus explained, we may observe

*Observe.*

Convinced  
and pardoned  
sinners, great  
exalters of  
Grace.

*That a reall and lively apprehension of the unsearchable sinfulness of a mans heart, is or should be a great motive to magnifie and exalt Gods grace in pardoning.* They are not words or expressions, but reall agonies and conflicts with the guilt of sinne, that will make us indeed admire Gods grace. *Peter* ready to sink in the sea, he will heartily desire Christs arm to support him; or like the Disciples in the ship, tossed with tempests, *Master save us we perish*; O Lord, save, pardon, we are damned else. The soul, that is tossed up and down in these deeps, would be glad to finde such an haven as remission of sinne; some learned men make that phrase *apsos*, or remission of sinnes, to be a metaphor from those wretched persons, who are cast into a dark dungeon, and there have fetters and manacles put upon them; oh how welcome are all those, that come to ease them of these fetters, and set them.

at liberty ! No lesse, yea far more welcome are those, who bring the glad tydings of the Gospel, and the blessed peace of a mediator, to the troubled sinner, who was bound and fettered in his conscience, not able to take any comfort, spirituall or temporall, in any thing: or else its made an allusion to the year of Jubilee, which was a most acceptable time to all poor indebted persons, for then was a generall release; This is to shew, how that pardon of sinne, and reconciliation with God, is highly esteemed only by such, as are even overwhelmed with the guilt of their sinne, and are wholly cast down with the apprehension of Gods displeasure, and his frowns: We have two pregnant examples for this, the one in *David*, Psal. 51. who being greatly wounded within him for the sinnes he had committed, and finding no rest for his bones, how affectionately doth he pray again and again for this washing and cleansing? Oh we had not had such a Psalm of so much spirituall hungering and longing after Gods mercy, if he had not been deeply afflicted because of his sinne. The other example we have in *Paul*, Rom. 7. where after a long and sad conflict with that Law of sinne working in him, he crieth out as a man undone; *Oh miserable man, who shall deliver me from this body of sinne?* but he doth not stay there; *I thank God through Jesus Christ.* Christ was the more welcome, because he had such a dangerous enemy in his own bowels.

To open this: When we say, *Onely the gracious heart, deeply sensible of the guilt of sinne, doth advance and set up this priviledge of cleansing from sinne: you may easily judge, that he must thereby set up and advance all those things which are the cause, of this cleansing, or without which it could not be.*

The humble pardoned sinner advanceth all the causes of pardon.

I.

The efficient cause.

Now there are these things necessary to the pardon of sin; First, *The efficient cause of it, is the meer goodnesse and free grace of God: There is nothing moveth him to this cleansing, but his meer mercy, Rom. 3. 25. Being justified freely by his grace: So then the wounded heart for sinne, that doth exalt pardon of sinne, is thereby also greatly affected with the cause of this, the free grace and meer love of God. Thus Psal. 51. According to the multitude of thy mercy, have mercy on me. This David in many Psalms is greatly affected with;*

and you may see *Paul*, like the silk-worm, weaving from his inward bowels heavenly enlarged expressions about Gods grace, sometimes calling it *the riches of his grace*, and the *unsearchable riches of his grace*. Oh the truly humble for sin, do love to hear, to read, to meditate on this point; This is the mount of transfiguration, of which they say, *It is good to be here*: That man is only an admirer of Gods grace, who is an astonished and an amazed man at his own vilenesse: Gods unsearchable riches of grace, are only prized by those who cry out of the unsearchable errors of their wayes: Therefore an *Antinomian*, or a *Papist* and *Arminian*, these though they have different principles, yet by their doctrine, they cannot truly and heartily advance grace; for the latter by their doctrines, strive to make us more beautifull and sound then indeed we are; and the other forbids those constant and serious humiliations for sinnes, both which do greatly take off from the Cordiall esteeming of Gods grace.

2.  
The meritorious cause.

The second thing, which procureth this pardon of sinne, is *Christ*, and *Christ* offered up as an *expiatory sacrifice*: Therefore his blood is said to *wash* or *cleanse*. Now *David* knew that this cleansing could not be without a *Messias*, for all those *Judaicall cleansings*, and *legall sacrifices*, they did typifie *Christ*, and the godly man even in those dayes, did look to *Christ* in them; Therefore haply the people generally did rest only in the offerings themselves, and the works of the Law without *Christ*, as appeareth by *Pauls* disputing against this in the Epistles; and no wonder they did so, when the light of the Gospel was not so glorious; for even in these bright times, when the Sun of righteousness is risen on high in our sphere, yet most people do rest in *duties and Ordinances*, as if by the performing of them meerly they had pardon and remission of sinnes, and not looking to *Christ* the body and fullnesse of all; so then when *David* prayeth, *cleanse me from sinne*, it is as much, as if he had desired to be sprinkled with *Christs* blood: But in the new Testament, when the Sunne was come to its verticall point, there you may see *Paul* no longer living, but *Christ* in him. Not only the soul of him that loveth, is where it loveth, but of him that believeth, in whom it doth believe:



believe: *I desire to know nothing but Christ crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. And again, *God forbid, that I should glory in any thing, save in the crosse of Christ*. Gal. 6. 14. *And Christ is made righteousness, wisdom and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. *It pleased God, that in him all fullnesse should dwell*, Col. 1. 19. This is the good Samaritan, that will not passe by, but pour oyl into the wounded soul. This is the Ark, in whom men are safe, while the floods of Gods wrath overwhelme others. This is the City of refuge; Though the justice of God pursue thee as a Malefactor, yet here is protection; Oh the affections, the ravishments, Oh the longings and breathings that the wounded heart hath after Christ: Then is the contrite spirit taken up with him, as you see the Spouse, the Church in the *Canticles*, with Christ her beloved, *the chiefest of ten thousands*.

Lastly, When we say, The afflicted Spirit through the sense of that depth of corruption in it self, doth highly esteem the grace of God in remission, this is also necessarily implied, *that it exalt faith, and sets it up, that grace above all others*, not that faith hath any dignity more then other graces, but because it's the instrument to *lay hold on Christ*, by that alone we receive forgiveness of sin, *Act. 26*. By that *Christ dwelleth in our heart*, Eph. 3. By faith we partake of the *fatnesse of the Olive*, Rom. 11. This is the hand that receiveth Christ the Treasure; This is the mouth that *eats* or feedeth on him; This is the *eye* that beholding the brazen Serpent makes us healed of the sting we had through sin; This holds out that red colour *the Bloud of Christ*, like *Rahab*, that the destroyer may not consume the Beleever with others, the bloud of the Sacrifices was to be sprinkled with Hysope, as *David Psa. 51*. implierth, now the bunch of Hysope was a poor and base herb comparatively, yet instrumentall to a great end: so faith is a grace that hath not the outward glory and honour, as other graces have, but yet is appointed by God for so glorious a priviledge as justification; so that in saying We are justified by faith, we do not thereby advance faith more then other graces, only faith debaseth us more, and giveth all to Christ. We have laid down this Introductory particular as necessary, because it tends to shew that pardon of sin, Gods  
grace,

3.  
The Instru-  
mentall cause.

grace, Christs Obedience, and Faith are considered all as one.

Reasons.

Come we now to shew why the godly heart thus wounded through sinne, will set up Gods grace in the forgivenesse thereof, and the Reasons will come from a twofold ground; From the nature of pardon of sin, and from the Subject who is so sadly affected: Let us consider the first at this time; and pardon must needs be precious to the troubled repenting soul,

I.  
From the suitability of  
pardon.

First, *Because of the proper and suitable finesse that is in it, to take away our grief:* It's only the fit remedy to a wounded conscience; When *David Psa. 32.* had all within consumed away through sin, what is that which he looketh upon as a blessed thing, but the *covering of sin*, the *not imputing of sin*? Oh there is nothing in the world can give ease to a broken heart but this forgivenesse, should you prefer it all the glory, all the riches and profits of the world, they would be accounted nothing, oh give me rest for my soul in Christ. No wonder then if the gracious heart sensible of the want of this great priviledge and mercy, be in praier and agonies often, mindes and regards not his Wife, Children, Houses, or great estates; Alas, these comforts are not the proper cure for their disease; As you see a man with the exquisite torment of the gout, it's not fine clothes, or a soft bed, that can give him any ease from that torture he hath, so neither when thou cryest, yea, roarest out, as *David* did, through guilt of sin; It's not thy honours, thy greatnesse, thy outward pomp, doth any thing avail, but still thy heart must be restless, and thou wilt cry out, I have no peace till thou art settled upon Christ.

2.  
The fullnesse  
of it.

Secondly, *Pardon of sin must needs be welcome because of the fullnesse and perfection of it;* Its a cleansing away, so that a man is made as *white as snow*; Its a blotting out, Its a covering of it: Its such a taking of it away, that it is no more; yea as if it had never been, God dealeth with the forgiven person, as if he had never sinned: most of the Scripture-expressions do denote the full taking away of the guilt of sinne when its pardoned: As Christ healed those that were diseased perfectly, he did not half heal them, or imperfectly: Thus when  
God

God forgiveth, he doth fully and perfectly forgive, he remembers the sinne no more, he throweth them *into the bottom of the sea*, never to come in sight more: Oh how welcome must such a priviledge be, when it shall be told the humbled sinner, Thy sinnes are quite taken away, God will never mention them more to thee; God will be as gracious to thee, as if thou hadst never been the man. Indeed, though God doth forgive the sinne, yet he may sometimes chastise and afflict notwithstanding, as we see in *David* and others, but these are medicinall and come onely from Gods love, they are not poenall or vindictive; so then Gods forgivenesse is full and perfect, that whereas in subduing the filth and power of sinne, God goeth by degrees, and the reliques of it abide in the godly, till the very last; in removing the guilt of sinne, God taketh all that away at once, *There is no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus; Rom. 8.1. Who can lay any thing to their charge? It is God that justifieth.*

3. The plenty of mercy in pardoning, this also must needs affect the soul. *Psal. 51. According to the multitude of thy mercy.* And God is said *to multiply to pardon*; so that as a man can never understand his errors, so he can never understand Gods mercy. Thus when God promised by *Esay*, that *he would abundantly, or multiply to pardon*: he giveth this reason, *Gods thoughts were not as theirs; but as the Heavens were above the earth, so were his mercies to their sinnes, Isa. 55.8.* As therefore high hills and great mountains may seem very big to us on the earth, but if they be compared to Heaven, the whole earth it self is but a *punctum*. Thus, though our sinnes may be vast, and numberlesse to us, yet in respect of Gods grace and mercy, they are nothing: As Gods essence and being is infinite, all the nations of the world, are but as a drop to him; so are all our sinnes to him, whose mercy is as infinite as his essence. Oh then how sweet must the meditations of Gods mercy be to that soul, who findes such a multitude, such a burden of sinnes, that it crieth out, Oh it is not an ordinary thing that can help me; it must be the infinite mercy of God, it must be the infinite merits of Christ: and then it must not be pardon for once or one day, or one years pardon, but as my sinnes are multi-

3.  
The multitude of pardons.



4.  
The freeness  
of it.

multiplied every day, so there must be multiplied pardons.

Lastly, *The freeness of this pardon, must needs draw out the affections of a broken heart*: For those words, *Who can understand his errors?* Who can finde out all his filth? (and if he cannot understand it, he cannot cleanse himself from all) could never be answered but for free mercy: A man would be left in eternall despair, and never get out, did not the free grace of God in forgiveness interpolate. Oh then how terrible must it be, for a soul to be brought into such a wilderness, that he can finde no way out: To be plunged into such dark holes, that he cannot see any light! yet this is the case of every man discovering sinne within him, till God cleanse him: He is as the man that saw great Armies against him, full of fear and despair, till his eyes opened, that he can see more for him, then against him.

Use.

Use of Instruction, Why it is that mens desires, affections, and all their endeavours are after earthly and worldly things: This is the cause they feel no want but of them: They apprehend nothing a misery, but to be without these things; whereas if thy heart were ever affected with thy horrible and unspeakable pollution, nothing in the world could content thee but Christ, nothing could satisfie thee but grace. Come to the poor malefactor, that is going to his dreadfull execution, its not the best food, the best rayment that he regards; but bring him a pardon, and then you comfort him. Thus it is with a man sensible of his sinnes, and wearied under them; tell him of his honours, of his estate, he crieth out, These are miserable comforters; but oh if he could enjoy Christ, if his sinnes were forgiven, though his food were bread and water, and his house a poor cottage, yet he should account one a continuall feast, and the other an Heaven. Thou then who art a worm and no man (in this sense) living only on earthly comforts, who art wholly taken up with worldly things, Oh little doest thou know what thou wastest: There is one more necessary thing then all this earthly greatness, and that is a pardon for thee. What would Judas have given, to have had his sinne covered by Gods grace? And *Psal. 32.* David lyeth languishing and pining away

away for want of this; Well, how carelesse thou now art, yet the time is coming when only Christ, only Gods favour will be in request.



S E R M. XX.

*More Reasons why the Soul truly sensible of Sinne, doth so greatly prize pardoning Grace.*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret finnes.*

Pardon of Sinne (we have heard) is highly magnified by an heart sensible of its unsearchable faithfulness, and that from many considerations, derived from the nature of this pardon. There remain some more from the concomitants, or effects of this cleansing. As

1. *Wheresoever there is a cleansing from the guilt of sinne, there is in some measure also from the power and filth of it.* Not but that justification and sanctification are two distinct mercies, which the Papists confound, only they are inseparably conjoynd together, as light and heat in the fire. This therefore must raise an high esteem of this cleansing from the guilt of sinne, because it hath alwayes such a welcome attendant, it comes with spirituall power and life, to conquer sinne. That these are twinnes in the womb of free grace, appeareth, Rom. 8. *There is no condemnation to those that are in Christ (here is justification) who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit,*

*So doe believe the heart faithful, and from our faith, Reason from the concomitants of pardon.*

I. Pardon of sin brings with it power against sin.

here is *sanctification*. And thus 1 *Joh. 1.* If we confesse our sinnes, he is faithfull to forgive and cleanse from all iniquity: So that the afflicted soul lying under the burden of sinfulness, seeing pardon to bring along with it some power to crucifie, and mortifie it, must needs pant and hunger after it. Oh that our hearers, were so spirituall, as to groan under this two-fold respect of sinne, The guilt of it, and the filth of it: then their souls would accordingly seek after and pray for, those two eminent mercies, justification, which removeth the guilt, and sanctification, which in some degree subdueth the filth of sinne. *These are the upper and lower springs:* These are the two arms of Gods grace receiving the soul: These are the two great lights in the Heaven of a Christian soul. Let men of the world, whose appetites are diseased, long for the dust, and the earth of the world, the godly heart hath more spirituall and heavenly desires.

2.  
It bringeth  
peace.

2. *This pardon of sin, bringeth peace with God, and an admirable serenity or tranquillity upon the whole man.* Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified, we have peace with God.* Oh how terrible and unspeakable is it, to have God our adversary! He can raise what hellish and black thoughts he pleaseth: He can command a number of gnawing wormes upon the consciences of men immediately, as he did once of Grasshoppers and Frogs. When God did but put forth some of his terror and majesty in giving the Law, how much afraid were all the people? yea *Moses* himself exceedingly trembled: If therefore God put forth all his wrath, who can abide? Now the guilt of sinne, that presently represents God as a provoked enemy, that suggesteth nothing but justice and vengeance, whereas pardon of sinne, represents God a gracious father, bringeth to minde all the precious promises, the fullnesse and sufficiency of Christ, and thereby causeth a calm, quiet frame of soul. This is meant by that *rest*, Christ promiseth to the *wearied soul*, that shall come to him, *Mat. 11. 25.* The want of this peace with God, ye see what an hell it caused in *Cains* and *Judasses* soul, what torments and wounds did they feel. God was angry, and who can command the windes and tempests of that anger to be still, but God alone? Its no boasting of any



any peace or friendship with the greatest in the world, while God from Heaven frowneth on thee.

3. Where this cleansing is, as there is peace, so from that floweth joy, even unspeakable joy, such as the world knoweth not, neither can it enter into their hearts to conceive, Rom. 5. 2. insomuch that the Kingdom of Heaven is said to consist in joy, as well as in other things: Yea Gal. 5. joy is the fruit of the Spirit: Oh then where a true and lively faith receiveth this pardon, there it causeth wonderfull joy and gladnesse of heart. David saith, God had put more joy into his heart, then they had when wine and oyl encreaseth, Psal. 4. This is the spirituall wine, that the Gospel giveth to those that are sad in heart, all the worldly joy and pleasures are but a blaze to this: The very Heaven could say, *Gaudium est res severa, Joy is a severe and solid thing.* That which wicked men have in their lusts, its but like the tickling of the itchy place, which leaveth more smart afterwards: What triumphing joy doth David expresse in many Psalmis, from the sense of Gods forgivenesse of his sinnes: Indeed, only that man may walk chearfully, the name of poverty, death, and all outward evils in the world, cannot or ought not to affright that man who hath this inward joy: Nabal in the midst of all his carnall mirth, at the very mention of Davids revengefull resolution against him, had his heart turned to a stone within him; There was no spirituall joy to revive and support him.

4. Where this cleansing is received by faith, there the heart is inflamed with much love, and that makes all obedience easie and delightfome. Mary Magdalen that wept so much, she could wipe Christs feet with her tears; whence came that distillation of such precious water, but from the fire of love kindled in her breast? and whence was that love? She loved much, because much was forgiven her, Luk. 7. 47. Now where the love of God doth thus inflame the soul, there Christs Commandments are not grievous. Love is like the spirit in Ezekiels wheels, that made them move so swiftly; so that dullnesse, sluggishnesse and wearisomenesse is quickly dispelled by heavenly love, as the ice is presently dissolved by the Sunne beams: yea where this love is kindled, arising from Gods pardon,

3.  
And Joy.

4.  
Also much  
love to God.

there slavish and tormenting fears, that carry pain and anxiety with them are also removed: So the Apostle *John*, 1 *Joh. cap. 4.* Where love is, there is no fear, for fear hath torment with it, such as a man findes that is tormented in his guts: Wonder not then, if the mourning and sorrowfull heart be thus glad of pardon, for it makes love to run like warm blood through all the veines: There is no winter or frost under this torrid zone.

5.  
A filiall bold-  
nesse,

5. *Where this cleansing is, there is a filiall boldnesse, and an holy confidence in all our approaches to God.* And this frame of spirit is more worth then all the world: A guilty heart, that feeleth no pardon, makes a man, with *Adam*, run and hide himself from God. The damned in hell, because they see no hope for pardon, cry to the mountains and hills to cover them from the Lambs wrath: Oh but remission of sinne obtained by faith, makes a man hold up his head; its accompanied with that spirit of *Adoption*, that makes us cry *Abba Father*. The gemination of the word, and the expression, crying, denoteth the boldnesse, and confident vehemency of the heart: And *Ephes. 3.* *We have accesse with boldnesse through faith.* Hence the Apostle, *Heb. 4. ult.* having declared what a sufficient high Priest we have in Heaven, the Lord Christ, who hath subdued our sinnes for us, he concludeth, *Let us come boldly to the Throne of grace.* The Scepter is not held out, that inviteth us to come into his presence, till our iniquities be pardoned: this is the great gulf that must be first removed.

6.  
And giveth an  
admirable sup-  
port in all out-  
ward tribula-  
tions.

6. *Lastly, Cleansing from sinne, is thus welcome to an afflicted spirit, because it giveth an heavenly fortitude, and admirable support in all outward tribulations and miseries.* *Rom. 8.* When *Paul* had treated of justification, and that nothing can be laid to the charge of him whom God pardoneth; he then breaketh out into that great triumph over death, and all other oppositions: and on the other side, every outward calamity breaketh into pieces, while the guilt of sinne is upon us: Alas, we are not able to indure any earthly misery, when inward guilt is also upon us: If there be the sting of sinne within, and the sting of death without, *This wounded spirit who can bear?* Here affliction is added to affliction, and not wine, but

but gall is given to the sorrowfull soul to drink.

In the next place we come to consider, what reasons there are on the subjects part, viz. the party deeply sensible of his unsearchable filthinesse; why he should so affectionately desire pardon of sinne. And

Reasons on the subjects part.

1. *Because its the nature of guilt, if not removed by pardon, to eat into the heart, and fret it more and more.* David, Psal. 32. telleth us, what a miserable object he was, while this guilt of sinne lay tormenting and scorching of him within. *My bones waxed old, through roaring all the day long.* His bones, the strongest part about him, and his vitall moisture was turned into the drought of summer: Thus you see, the guilt of sinne if not taken away, doth inwardly consume a man: That as a man who is hung up in gibbets to be starved to death, if he have no food given him, he will eat up the flesh of his own arms, and devour his own self, if possible; Thus a man destitute of Gods favour, hungering after Gods grace, if he cannot enjoy it, will even devour and eat up himself; his fears, his horrors, his despair, will swallow him up, as the whale did *Jonah*. As those who have the disease of the Wolf, if it have no outward thing applied to it, to feed upon, it will eat and consume inwardly: so it is here, if they have not the grace and mercy of God to support and establish them, they do inwardly pine away. Oh then wonder not, if the pardon of sinne be thus welcome, for no tongue can expresse, what the guilt of sinne doth in a troubled conscience, how it eateth, consumeth and devoureth.

1. Guilt unpardoned eats into the heart, and frets more and more.

2. *They must needs look out for pardon, because of the insufficiency, and impossibility that is in themselves to blot out the least sinne:* If so be, that upon sinne committed, the tears, sighs and religious duties of a repenting man, could make satisfaction to God, and that these would presently wash him clean; then he need not so solicitously beg of God for pardon: but all these are imperfect, and need forgiveness as well as our finnes; our very prayers, tears and humiliation, they are so foul, that they need cleansing also: What then is left for a troubled sinner? Where is hope to be had, seeing he cannot cleanse himself? only in the blood of Christ. When *Naaman*

2. From the impossibility for a mans self to blot out the least sinne.

cannot



cannot be cleansed by any waters in his own country, though he be unwilling, yet his best course is to go and wash himself in *Jordan*. Though it be against our pride, and principles of self-fullnesse within us, to renounce all our duties as unclean, and to put our trust in Christ onely; yet if ever we will be healed, this way we must take. *Oh then what miserable comforters, are all the popish Casuists, who detain their penitent person, in a scrupulous and puzzling consideration about his satisfaction, and meritorious works, and in the mean while, direct him not to Christ onely to be made clean!* In this wilderness were all people kept, going backward and forward, finding no true ease for their souls, till the light of the Gospel appeared, which shewed us the ready way to *Canaan*. All the while a man is kept with puzzling doctrines, to be his own Saviour in part, he doth but roll the stone up the hill, which immediatly comes down upon him; he labours in vain, the waters come in at one place, as much as he emptieth them out at another. And this impossibility of ever finding any true ground of comfort from those popish doctrines, was the occasion to make *Luther* and others seek out for that evangelicall grace revealed in the Gospel. It was *Pythagoras* his rule, *Cor ne edis, be not a caniball to thy self;* but the Gospel prescribeth believing in Christ for pardon, and that will compose all the troubles and tempests of the soul.

3.  
because of the  
greatnesse of  
the evil of sin,

3. *Therefore doth the soul affected with its sinfulness, fly out for pardon, because the evil of sinne is greater both in the nature of it, and in the apprehension of a godly man, then any temporall evil can be.* Now then, if it be so naturall, for men in temporall necessities and calamities, to seek out for temporall remedies and comforts; no marvell if spirituall wants do drive us out more to spirituall supports. The man that lieth tormented with great bodily pain, he cannot rest or sleep for it, how doth he cry out for some ease? he bids this servant run, and that servant run to get some to help: now the trouble of conscience is far more afflicting, it takes all our desires and comforts away, as we see in *David* and *Job*, and therefore they cannot but be more importunate and desirous to meet with spirituall refreshments. As the joy of the Gospel is more  
then

then ever entred into the heart of a man to conceive, so are the terrors and troubles for sinne, more then ever a man could imagin: Oh how often do such wish they had never been born? how often do they say, Oh if it were any outward misery, if it were any bodily trouble, I could bear it; but the frowns of God are upon me, an hell is within me, the arrowes of the Almighty stick into my heart; and this makes him cry out, he cannot bear it, he cannot hold out any longer. Though wicked men feel nothing but the pleasures and delights of sinne, yet when the Spirit of God by the Word shall convince thee of it, set thy sinnes in order before thee; when this honey in the mouth shall be turned into gall in thy belly, then thou wilt go bowed down, then thou wilt be a burden unto thy self: Then all thy desires and comforts in the world, will wither away, and all thy pantings and breathings will be after Gods favours, and his grace in pardoning: Oh that you who commit sinne with delight, would hearken to this; Either here or hereafter sinne will be an heavy burden, it will presse thee down: Oh therefore now, while the acceptable time of grace is, come in and sue for thy pardon.

4. *The heart sensible of its vast and unsearchable sinfulness, must needs cry out for Gods grace, because of the gracious and mercifull workings of the Spirit of God in them.* As in that dark abyss at first, the Spirit moved on the waters, and by degrees caused light and a beautifull form to appear; so the Spirit of God, which first wrought all that confusion and grief in the soul, will direct it to mercy and comfort: for this you must know, A man cometh not to be sensible of, or wounded for sinne, by his own reason and naturall strength, but it is the mighty power of God, which turneth this barren heath into running streames, that makes water to gush out of this rock. Experience confirms this; Let a man hear never so many Sermons; Let him consider and hearken never so much, yet he never is affected at the heart, till the Spirit of God work on him and in him; then he is another man, he is of another minde, of other desires and affections: Its God only that stops this Jordan in her course and stream, that stayeth the wicked man from going on in his obstinacy. So then, as the Spirit of

4.

Because of the workings of the Spirit of God in them.

God made these meltings and troubles of soul at first, so the same Spirit doth heal and comfort : That which was the spirit of bondage, is now the spirit of adoption ; That which made us with groans *unutterable* cry out, *Oh wretched sinner that I am*, the same makes us cry *Abba Father* : so that he which wounded will also heal. This spirituall exercise and agony of a godly man, is not begun or finished by humane strength or considerations. When therefore at any time, the Spirit of God convinceth of sinne, and doth not direct to faith and comfort, then is the heart of man in wofull darknesse ; then it crieth out, *my sinnes are greater then I can bear*, his soul is in bitter pangs and travell, but cannot bring forth.

From hence therefore we shall take an occasion to handle this question, *Whether the preaching so much about the Guile and hypocrisie of the Heart, be not an occasion, to take off from the life of faith, and joy in evangelicall promises, for we can hardly minde the one but we forget the other ?* Though David was thus plunged in the depth of his sinnes, and yet could cry out for grace, yet many have not the strength as he had : I shall therefore shew, how this necessary subject is to be treated on, viz. *The unsearchable depth of sinne in a mans heart, and yet no stop be put to a Gospel life, and the spirituall imbracements of Christ only.*

*Use.*

Now I conclude with an Admonition, to wicked men covered over with sinne yet feeling no burden, cry not out for any deliverance: How is it thou art become thus stupid ? There is much wickednesse of thine, it needs no searching out : It cannot be hid from thy eyes, thou canst not turn thy face from it, and yet thou seekest not to be cleansed. Doth David bewail the sins he cannot finde out ? doth he intreat to be cleansed from such sinnes he doth not yet know in himself, and thou knowest many grievous sins by thy self ? They come into thy minde every Sermon, and yet thou seekest not out to be cleansed. Doeſt thou presume to come to God in holy duties, before thou art roused from such noisome pollutions. Is not the hour and day yet to come, that ever thou didst with sorrow and mourning of spirit pray to God, that he would cleanse thee ? The Elements are not heavy (they say) in their proper



proper place; Its a signe, that siene is thy proper course,  
which thou livest and delightest in, because its no more a  
trouble to thee: There cannot be any tast or relish in Christ  
and the Gospel, till you be thus broken and contrite in  
heart; You that are full of worldly contents, must needs  
loath this honey-combe: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed  
are they that mourn*, saith our Saviour. Oh it is a blessed thing,  
to preach to a people, that mourn after Christ, to come with  
the glad tydings of the Gospel, to those who were cast down  
with the sad curses of the Law.

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## S E R M. XXI.

*That a due and sound managing of the necessary Point of Self-examination, and constant searching into our selves, lest any false way be in us, is wonderfully consistent with the life of Faith; yea and necessarily coherent, with that joyfull and comfortable walking the Gospel doth require, and that a Minister, or a particular Christian, doth but half his work that doth not attend to both,*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret finnes.*

**F**ROM the Doctrine premised (*viz.*) *That an heart deeply sensible of, and even overwhelmed with its unsearchable vilenesse and sinfulness, is thereby provoked to magnifie the grace of God in pardoning, I shall inferre one Use more of Instruction, to inform us in the main and necessary practicall Point, namely, That a well-ordered study about the hypocrisie and deceitfull*

ceitfull lusts of our own hearts, is no impediment of, but a sur-  
therance to that excellent life of the Gospel, and dependance upon  
the Covenant of grace. A man may at the same time live the  
life of faith through the righteousness of Christ, yet walk  
with an holy fear and trembling, lest he be an hypocrite or  
castaway; and so there may be such a solid and well metho-  
dized preaching about the unsearchable errors of a mans  
heart, the exactnesse of grace, the difficulty of discerning be-  
tween truth and counterfeiting in good works; that also may  
sweetly comply with, and even embrace all that glorious and  
comfortable life, which ariseth from Gospel priviledges.  
The connexion of *Dauids* sad expostulation, with this vehe-  
ment petition, doth afford a proper occasion, to remove that  
stumbling block, which now more then ever is laid in some  
mens wayes, viz. That its enough in our preaching, to exalt  
the glorious offices of Christ, to describe him onely crucified, and  
ascended into Heaven, with all the admirable effects thereof: and  
as for pressing this doctrine about the heart-work so much,  
to be daily ransacking into the differences of truth and hypo-  
cristie: This they think is to keep people, in a low, legall and  
despondent way: They think we onely give water and not  
wine to drink: They think us such unnaturall fathers, that  
when our children call for bread, we give them a stone: They  
think we wrong our people, by keeping them on mount *Cal-  
vary*, representing to their thoughts, onely sad and discon-  
solate objects, never taking them up to the mount of trans-  
figuration. This is greatly stood upon in these dayes, as if  
many Ministers were having their people even into *Egypt*  
again, or keeping them in the wilderness, by uncomfortable  
darknesse about the Law and duties, and not putting them  
into the Land of *Canaan*. It will therefore be very seasonable  
to the times, and not impertinent to the text in hand, to  
shew; That a due and sound managing of the necessary Point of  
self-examination, and constant searching into our selves, lest any  
false way be in us, is wonderfully consistent with the life of Faith;  
yea and necessarily coherent, with that joyfull and comfortable  
walking the Gospel doth require; and that a Minister or a par-  
ticular Christian doth but half his work that doth not attend to



*both.* To speak much of Christ, and yet not presse people to digg deep and to lay a sure foundation of godlinesse, is to build high roofs of a stately house, and to take no care for the foundation, which will not abide storms and tempests. Ag in, to be alwayes cutting and hamering into the soars of the heart, and searching into the wounds, never preparing the oyl or balm of the Gospel, is like the unwise Physician, to apply Corrosives, but not to use healing and suppling remedies.

And first to satisfie this Objection, Consider the example and practise of Christ and the Apostles in their preaching. Certainly we are not to affect an higher way then they walked in, and you shall observe how carefull they were to keep up both these points: To see that we made sure work in the matter of grace; and also that we depended onely on Christ for our acceptance. Concerning Christ, we know he had *the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to the contrite in heart, Isa. 40.5.* yea so tender was he, that he would not *bruise the broken reed, nor quench the smoking flax, Mat. 12.20.* Where he saw any hopefull beginning, he would give great encouragement: Yet there is no subject that he doth more ordinarily treat on, pressing over again and again, then this, about looking to themselves that they do not take that for grace which is not grace; that they be sure to search deep enough in these things. He is often in telling them, how farre hypocrites and reprobates may go. This being a theme he did so constantly discourse upon, its plain, he saw the necessity of it. He saw multitudes of those that followed him, not take up their profession upon sure and lasting grounds, therefore would he touch them to the very quick, and get out all the rottenesse in the bottom of the wound, before he did heal them. The *Parable* of the severall kindes of ground, which is of severall hearers, is very punctuall to this purpose: So also that famous one of the *foolish Virgins*, besides severall other discourses of our Saviour, they were wholly to instruct in this, That godlinesse is a farre more difficult and rare thing then most are convinced of: Then when men have prayed vehemently, crying *Lord, Lord,* when they have been famous

famous in all externall duties of religion; yet God hereafter may tell them, *he knew them not*. If ever the word was a two-edged sword, to divide between the marrow and the joynts, it was out of Christs mouth in this particular: so then we see him discharging this part diligently; but he stayeth not here, he doth also largely describe his own office and power, he giveth gracious invitations to troubled and afflicted sinners, he healeth as well as wounds: In this Ark we have the Manna as well as the Rod; so that sensiblenesse and tender- nesse about sinne, and a powerfull lively way of believing in Christ, are like the radicall moisture and innate heat which (they say) preserve the life of a man. Thus we see an example from Christ. And for the Apostles, I shall instance in *Paul*, who seemeth to be more affected and enlarged with Gods grace to sinners then any other, because he had more experimentally tasted of it: now as his mouth runneth over with expressions about Gods grace, sweeter then honey or the honey combe, yet observe, that he doth withall diligently describe the properties and duties of such who receive this grace: and therefore that 8<sup>th</sup> of the *Romans*, which seemeth to be like *Jacobs ladder*, carrying a man up to Heaven in divine meditations; yet how diligently doth he inculcate this, *That onely such, who mortifie the deeds of the flesh, who live and walk in the Spirit, who are heavenly minded, do enjoy these priviledges?* and that none might abuse his precious doctrine, he telleth us concerning his own self, *That he kept down his body*; by that implying, all holy care and endeavour, both about soul and body, lest when he had preached to others, he himself should be a castaway, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. And further, *Austin* thought, that because many of *Pauls* expressions, magnifying faith, Christ and his righteousness, might weaken the practicall power of godlinesse; that therefore *James* was moved by the Spirit of God, to write his Epistle, the whole scope whereof is, to shew, that no faith justifieth, nor can any man have benefit by his bare believing in Christ, if an holy life, and good works do not accompany it.

In the second place consider, *That the auditory to whom the Minister of the Gospel preacheth, may be very different: for either*

either they may be generally a people ignorant or prophane, and at the most resting in a formall way of religious duties, or else they may be a people of a broken and contrite spirit; such who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who mourn and are cast down for their unworthinesse: and now according to these different dispositions, so these distinct truths have their appropriated seasonableness. To a pharisaicall and formall people, the discovery of sinne in all the inward filthinesse of it, The opening of all the secret hypocrisie of the heart, The discovering of mens principles, aimes and ends, is very necessary, and to such our Saviour preached: whereas if a people be wounded, and cast down with their sinnes, to such we are to bring the *gladtydings of the Gospel*, and with the Angels to cry, *Glory be to God on high, peace on earth, and good will to men.* When Felix desired to hear Paul about faith in Christ, he presently preacheth about *righteousnesse and temperance*, which Felix grossly failed in, and the *judgement to come*, Acts 24. This Paul did, as thinking it the best way to save Felix his soul, and to make him happy indeed, as well as in name. But generally in our times, the number of afflicted, mourning Christians are very few; the greater part, are either *prophane*, or *formalists*, and *self-justiciaries*, and therefore searching and piercing discoveries of the falshood and guile of mens hearts, whereby they are so apt to daub, and make half or imperfect works in Christianity, are the most necessary subject we can preach upon. As therefore its the skill of Husbandmen, to know what seed is most proper for his particular ground, and the prudence of the Physitian, to distinguish of the diseases and constitutions of his patients, so it should be of the Ministers of the Gospel, to presse duties exceedingly to some, and the gracious promises very much to the other.

In the next place let us consider, what is the due and right methodizing of these distinct subjects, *viz.* the work of grace within us, and the gift of grace without us. And

1. *Its necessary to keep our hearts in the study of our own selves, and examination therein, so that we do not put in such a bitter herbe of doctrine as Papists and some others do,*  
about



about the impossibility of any certainty we can have of the truth of grace in our selves, without divine revelation; which the Papists grant hath been vouchsafed to some few, as Paul and others: for the truth is, to keep the godly alwayes puzzling and tying themselves about the danger of hypocrisie, and withall to add, that they can never come to any assurance of the truth of grace in themselves, is to detain them in a wandering wilderness, is to put in vexing ingredients, that the wound may never be cured, is as vain in Divinity, as those in Alchymy who spend their labour and estates to finde the Philosophers stone: When Christ was risen, it was a vain thing to seek for him in the sepulcher, and constantly to abide there. To teach them, that there can be no certainty of our being in the state of grace: to nourish these doubts and fears, as the proper effect of humility, is indeed to teach men with briars and thorns, as they did the men of *Succoth*. But no wonder the Papists teach such uncomfortable doctrine, for thereby they inbase their own Church-commodities as excellent receipts; doing herein like some beggars, that will alwayes keep their wounds raw, that so they may partake of greater almes.

2. *The people of God are to be instructed in the unsearchableness of their errors, without any prejudice to a Gospel-life, if they look upon this duty only as the preparative, as the way, not as the end or the center.* Certainly those Christians wrong themselves and the grace of God, who are only in examination, intending no further work, but alwayes exercising themselves herein: No, David did otherwise, he groaneth under his corruption, but then flieth to grace as a sure refuge. So Paul doth lament and bewail that Law of sinne within him, yet runneth unto the grace of God in Christ. That which the godly should aim at, is, first to see they are prepared and qualified with the truth of grace, and this foundation being laid, then the rest of their study and affections is to be drawn out about Christ. John the beloved of Christ, who is so much affected with Gods love, yet he giveth severall characters, by which we may know when we are of God: We are to seek for a rest to our souls, and that cannot be from the graces

A a

within

within us : This then must be granted, that when the godly are acquainted with the truth of grace in themselves, they are then to seek out further for Christ, and the Covenant of grace, as that which is the chief duty in Christianity. Be not then alwayes in the way, desire to be at the journies end.

3. *Our carefull distinguishing between the truth of grace, and the counterfet of it, will not prejudice the life of faith, if so be we do not make them causes to rest upon for our justification and pardon of sinne.* It was the great complaint of the Apostle, that some false teachers taught *justification by the works of the Law*, Gal. 2. and as many as did so, he said, they were *fallen from Christ* : and thus if any put trust in their own righteousness, they do not only seek to finde grace in their lives, but put confidence also in it afterwards ; this man sets up a *Dagon* against the *Ark*, he sets up something in Christs room ; he goeth about with the *Jews* to establish his own righteousness, and then no wonder if he never come to prize a Gospel-righteousnesse ; but if the godly look for the presence only, as being necessary by Gods command, without which there is no grace or happinesse vouchsafed to a man, and go no further, abhorring all self-confidence, then this makes a mans heart a fit vessell to receive the oyl of the Gospel : Its so farre from hindring, that it dresseth and prepareth the heart, for Christ to come and lodge in it : so that this is the right method, to preach the necessity of the truth of grace, but to preach down all causality thereof to our justification : We bring another Gospel, if we do any other wayes ; and so though we were Angels, yet we were to be accursed : Those Sermons then will never eclipse the glory of the Gospel, which tend to the searching of the depth of a mans heart, yet withall instruct, that though they should finde grace in their hearts to their comfort and desire, yet nothing but Christ must be relied on. Admire imputed righteousness, as if thou hadst no inherent, yet labour and pray for inherent, as if there were no imputed. The people of God are sometimes affected in their sense and feeling, as those that have the disease *Ephialtes*, we call it, a trouble with the riding of the mare. They think some horrid and heavy load lying upon

upon them without them, when its nothing but some distempers of humor within: So it is with the children of God, sometimes they have dreadful and formidable apprehensions about God, and his severity, as one that did even seek an opportunity to damn, when all the distemper is in themselves: Its not any thing without from God, but their sad unbelieving and suspicious thoughts within: Do not therefore let any trouble within oppose the free offer of Gods grace without: but as no man ever hated his own flesh, but cherisheth and nourisheth it; so do not thou thy soul, but cherish it with imputed righteousness.

4. To teach people self-examination and study about the work of grace in themselves, will not exclude a gospel-life, unlesse we preach *satisfactory and meritorious works to be done by us, to make a recompence unto God.* Thus we justly complained of those times when Popish Doctrines had covered the face of the whole Church; Then was the Sun of Righteousnesse under a Cloud; Then mans satisfaction and not Christs was exalted; Then the Popes indulgences hurried Gods indulgence in pardoning; Then some relique of a Saint was more magnified then the obedience of Christ. Now its an unreasonable thing in some Antinomians to call the doctrine of necessity of Repentance and a strict godly life, Popery, for thus the whole Scripture would incur our rash censure; Keep we then within these bounds and limits, and then say, Oh let the Ministry powerfully search into every dark corner, let it finde out every false way, The more searching and close it is, the more welcome it will be to me: Thus there cannot be any opposition against free grace and Christ, from a true and right pressing of the inward, strict, and powerfull way of grace: We shall shew on the other side, that a right magnifying of Christ and pardon, doth not oppose a daily sollicitude and holy trembling about our selves: Now, then is Christ and Grace rightly preached when its exalted according to the extent and latitude of the Scripture, for seeing Christ is not only revealed to be a Saviour, but we have also his Commandments and manifold duties which he enjoyneth us to observe, he preacheth but half



half Christ that mentioneth only the benefits by him, and not the duties required also, Christ is the life, but he is also the Truth and the Way. He is the head, and all fullnesse is from him, yet the members are to receive of this fullnesse, so that many mistake what it is to preach Christ, and the Gospel; Oh they think you must tell them of nothing but joy and heavenly embracements; They think you must in every Sermon make them like *Paul* snatched up into the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body they cannot tell, for certainly *Paul* was no Gospel-Preacher then because he is much in commending the powerfull practise of all graces, both as we are Christians, and as in such relations. Hence in severall places are those many directions about husbands and wives, and children, and servants, to do their duties, so that its not true Christ, or the true Gospel, but a meer Idoll of their own brain, who do not preach Christ, pardon of sinne in the full latitude of the Scripture-direction: *There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared*, saith *David*. And how notably doth *Paul* thunder in this point, *Rom. 7.1.* *What, shall we sinne that grace may abound? God forbid.* See here *Paul* hath a God forbid, that any should be the lesse tender and fearfull to sin, because grace doth abound; and thus have I removed this Objection, which I had a fit occasion offered me to answer, from the connexion of *David*'s complaint and his Petition.

Use.

A twofold Use may be made, First, To discover the folly of all such who boast of grace, and speak much of the merits of Christ, yet are not afflicted with the known and unknown sinfullnesse that is in them, In pains, In calamities, They tell us of trusting in Christ, of hoping for pardon, but not a word of that load and burthen which they finde sin to be upon them; Thou must make a new Bible, and bring a new Christ, and a new way of pardon, if ever such an one as thou art dost expect pardon.

And Secondly 'Tis of Admonition to the godly, not like *Rachel* for her Chidren, so thou for thy sinnes to sit disconsolate alwaies, and refuse to be comforted. Do not

not divide and separate those things which God hath en-  
joyned; Thy sinfullnesse consider, but consider Christ al-  
so; Neither of these mill-stones may be taken to pledge,  
between which thou maist be made pure bread, as *Luther*  
once.

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As 3 SEET

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## SECT. VI.

Of Sinnes of Ignorance, Presumption, and Reigning in a man; As also the Mitigations and Aggravations of Sinne.

## SERM. XXII.

*Of Sinnes of Ignorance; And how it comes about that a godly man may live in sin and not know it.*

PSAL. 19. 12.

*Cleanse me from secret sinnes.*



WE are now arrived at the last considerable particular in this eighth verse, which is the object matter of the Petition, That from which David desireth to be cleansed, viz. *secret sinnes*: In the Hebrew it's only *secret*, and is for the explication of errors, which he had mentioned before, viz. *such*



such sinnes, that through ignorance or any other way I cannot discern. Therefore our Translators do well adde sinnes, though in a different character, to shew it is not in the originall. Now a sinne may be said to be secret or hidden two waies.

First, In respect of others, That others do not know it; and thus many men commit grosse and vile sinnes, which their own consciences accuse and condemn, only they labour to conceal them from others. Thus the Apostle said, *It was a shame to speak what was done by some in secret*, Eph. 5.12. and they are called 2 Cor. 4.14. *The hidden things of dishonesty*, because it's the property of every man like Adam to hide and cover his sin from others, and if possible from God himself. Now David doth not mean such secret sinnes here; for howsoever it be true, that a godly man dare not allow himself in any secret known sin, as we see in Joseph, *How can I do this and sin against God!* yet David reacheth to an higher degree of grace in this Text, He is so far from conniving at any sin known to himself, though secret to others, That he is afraid and praieth against even those sinnes that may be in him, and yet he not know them.

Secondly, A sinne may be said to be secret or hidden, not only in respect of the knowledge of others, but also our own knowledge, so that the man who doth such a thing, yet doth not at all think he sinneth therein, and this David praieth against in the Text. Now it may be objected, *How any thing that cometh meerly through ignorance can be a sinne, if it be wholly from ignorance it's involuntary, and if it be involuntary how can it be a sin, seeing there is no consent?* Hence an axiome of *Austins* is urged by the Papists (who would not have that lust rising up in us against our consents, and antecedently to our reason and deliberation, to be truly and formally a sinne,) viz. *that usq; adeo, peccatum est voluntarium malum, ut nullo modo sit peccatum, si non sit voluntarium*, and is it not another rule, *invincibilis ignorantia excusat à toto?* To answer this: the Scripture makes the formall nature of a sinne to lye in this, *that it be a transgression of the Law*, as appeareth by *Johns* definition, 1 Joh. 3. whether it be involuntary or come from

Object.

Answ.

from ignorance, that doth not take off from the sinne. Hence we read that the *Jews* had their sacrifices for their *sinnes of ignorance*, Lev. 4. 12, 13. Lev. 5. 15. and *Paul*, Rom. 7. calls that sinne, which yet *he would not yea he hated*: And as for that of *Austin*, he himself did not understand it of originall sinne, but of *actuell sinnes*: and whether a thing may be said to be voluntary, either *immediately*, because directly and immediately willed by the will, or *mediately* and interpretatively, because it is willed in the cause of it: and thus originall sinne, and all the sinnes that are committed out of ignorance, error, inadvertency, they are voluntary in the *remote cause*, and so cannot be said to be committed without the will. And as for the other rule, that *invincible ignorance* doth totally excuse, that may be true in some particular facts amongst men, but *respectu juris divini*, or the Law of God, there cannot be any excusable ignorance; for every man is bound to have a knowledge of Gods will, and so his ignorance whereby he sinnes, is a privation of a rectitude that ought to be in every mans understanding. Thus you see, that sinnes are sinnes, because a breach of Gods Law, though we many times know them not to be so; and therefore *David* by a holy caution and godly jealousie, doth pray against such sinnes.

*Observ.*

A godly man should be humbled for his unknown sinnes.

Whence it is that a man may not understand his Sinnes.

I.

From the wound that is upon a mans minde by originall Sinne.

*Obs.* Its the duty of godly men to be humbled for, and to desire pardon of not only the sinnes they know and are convinced of, but even of unknown sinnes: He is to have an holy jealousie, that some unknown sinne, some undiscovered sinne do not damn him; it may be there may be more danger from these then known sinnes, because when discovered, they are more easily withstood and striven against; but an unknown enemy, or an unknown disease doth easily kill, so an unknown sinne may quickly destroy us.

To open this Doctrine, we shall first discover the grounds whence it may arise that our sinnes be hid from us; how it may come about, that a man doth not understand his sinnes: And

1. It ariseth from that dangerous wound and disease, which is upon a mans minde by originall sinne: and although a godly man be renewed in his minde, and have this eye-salve, yet the Apostle saith, *We know but in part*. If the Philosopher could

say,

say, that even in naturall truths, our understandings were but like *noctua ad solem*, the Owls eyes to the Sunne; how much more is this true, in Divine and heavenly things! No wonder then, if the godly lye in many sinnes of ignorance, seeing they have knowledge but in part; and the Apostle in that comprehends his own self, though *taken up into the third Heaven, and hearing things unutterable*. Yea and that in the time of the Gospell also, when a greater measure of knowledge is vouchsafed, *Paul* thought his former time, a time of childhood, *he spake and understood as a childe*: but yet, when he comes to speak as a man, and childish things are done away, while he is in this life, *Paul* is not able to know all things by himself, and therefore he said, *though he knew nothing by himself, yet therein he was not justified, because it was God that judged*, 1 Cor. 4.4. Oh then how humble and debased should Gods children be in their own eyes! for if they do and can understand such errors, and so much filthinesse in themselves, that they cannot indure and abide themselves, what would they do, if they could behold all their deformities?

2. Therefore the people of God cannot see all the spots and blemishes that are in themselves, because of their self-love and self-flattery, the reliques whereof are in the godly as well as other sinnes, yea sometimes they are too active: We see in *David*, concerning the matter of *Bathsheba*, how severe he was in judging the supposed man that was so injurious in *Nathans* Parable; and he was so farre blinded with self-love, that he did not think he was the man. And thus *Judah* also in the matter of *Thamar* whom he had defiled, how zealous was he! *Bring her out to be burnt*, not considering that he was guilty of adultery. Now then if in grosse sinnes, a godly man may so farre love himself, and indulge himself, that he shall not know his errors, how much rather in sinnes more difficultly found out! Many sad failings, and divers miscarriages the children of God may run into, and yet have such a mist before their eyes, that they see nothing: Others they wonder and say, How dare such if they fear God, if they have felt the bitterness of sinne, if they know what godlinesse means, allow themselves in such wayes! but though the godly see in

B b

many

2.  
From self-love and self-flattery.



many things, yet self-love puts a vail before their eyes in other particulars: What a cloud was upon *Jonahs* spirit, when the Lord expostulating with him for his disobedience and discontent, he saith to God himself, *I do well to be angry?* Here *Jonah* did not see his froward disposition, if he had, he would have said the clean contrary, *I do ill to be angry; I abhorre my self, because I have been like a beast before thee O God:* You see then, the people of God through self-love may be so farre transported, as that they do not only not understand their errors, but they justifie them, they plead for them; they say they do well. What need have we of *David's* prayer to God, that he would prove him, and try him, if there were any doubt, or false way in him.

2.  
From neglect  
of searching  
and studying  
himself and  
his wayes.

3. *Sinnes are many times hid from the godly mans eye, though he commits them, because he is not diligent and accurate in making a search of himself, and in an impartiall studying of his own wayes.* If any sinne be hid, as *Saul* was behinde the stuff, or as *Rahab* had hid the Spies, unlesse a man be very carefull to search, he shall think no sinne is there where it is. Hence it is, that the Scripture doth so often command that duty of *searching and trying, of examining and communing with our hearts;* now what need were there of this duty, but that its supposed many secret and subtle lusts lye lurking in our breasts, which we take no notice of? If then the godly would finde out their hidden lusts, know the sinnes they not yet know, they must more impartially judge themselves; they must take time to survey and examine themselves, they must not in an overly and slight manner, but really and industriously look up and down, as they would search for thieves; and they must again and again look into this dark corner and that dark corner of their hearts, as the woman sought for the lost groat. This self-scrutiny and self-judging, this winnowing and sifting of our selves, is the only way to see what is chaff, and what is wheat; what is meer refuse, and what is induring.

4.  
Because of the  
great deceit-  
fulness that is  
in sinne.

4. *The people of God sometimes do not understand their sinnes, because of the great deceitfulness that is in sinne, it steals in upon us unawares.* Hence is that phrase, *Be not deceived:* and its called, *the deceitfulness of sinne,* Heb. 3. 13. It hath many secret

secret wayes of insinuating; it is like a *Dalilah*, its like *Jaël* to *Sisera*; Sinne is a sweet poison, it tickleth while it stabbeth: no wonder then, that a godly man may commit sinne and he not know it, for the first thing sinne doth, is to bewitch him, to put out his eyes, to take away his sense and feeling; to do to a man, as *Noahs* daughters did to their father, make him drunk, and then he doth he knoweth not what: Thus many kinde of sinnes come with such pleasures or profits, or fair pretences, sutable to flesh and blood, that the delight and content they bring with them, make the godly for the present be secure, and they apprehend no danger at all; as *Joab* came with a kind salute to *Abner*, and thrust him under the fifth rib, while *Abner* thought of nothing but kindnesse. Thus it is with sinne, it comes smiling, it comes pleasing and humouring of thee, while it giveth thee that deadly stabb.

5. The godly do not understand many of their sinnes, sometimes because of custom and education: They have been alwayes brought up in such a way, they have alwayes been accustomed to such usages; now because they were never reproached, nor heard of the sinfullnesse of them, therefore it is, that they do many things without scruple or fear, which the godly of greater light and knowledge dare not do. Thus the Apostle, *Rom. 15.* speaks of some who were weak in faith, by reason of their education and custom to Jewish observances: They could not but make a difference between meates and meates, between dayes and dayes: This was their weaknesse, yet they could not presently be brought out of it; and our Saviour supposeth this in that admirable and prudent rule he giveth, *No man putteth new wine into old bottles, &c. Matth 9 17.* The meaning is, as appeareth by the occasion, No Minister that is wise, will suddenly presse high and more sublime duties to those that are yet weak, and through custom and education are not fit to receive such strong meat, but they must be prepared by degrees: It may fall out then, that some godly men do build hay and stubble upon the good foundation, and all the while, they think not, nor know its hay and stubble; and a great cause of this, may be custom and education: they have not been brought up under better knowledge, and where better instruction was to be had.

5.  
Because of custom and education.

6.  
Because of  
their inward  
and imme-  
diate alliance  
with the heart  
of a man.

6. Sinnes may be hid from the godly, because they are of a more inward and immediate alliance with the heart of a man: They are the immediate issue and offspring of the soul, such are the thoughts, the notions, the aimes and intentions of our heart: such sinnes as these, because they are of a more subtle and close nature, a man doth the lesse discover them; whereas for grosse actuall sinnes, those a man may more easily be convinced of: If you ask then, What are those sinnes which a godly man takes least notice of? You will finde, they are not grosse and outward transgressions, but *heart-sinnes*, the thoughts, the intentions, the motions of the soul, a world of these may passe through the soul, and be never examined; You see the Pharisees could quickly discern any of those Camels, those great, big sinnes in a mans practise, but then those gnats they could swallow down without any pain at all, such were the sinnes of their hearts, They made the *outside of the dish clean*, but all the filth was within: Oh then how little do the godly understand of their heart-pollutions, the thoughts and intentions of their heart; These are very undiscernable, you see the very thoughts and all other acts of the soul are hardly perceived, we hardly know when we think or will, much more then do we hardly discover the sinfulness of those actings of the soul: The Philosophers say, We cannot perfectly know the nature of *materia prima*, because of its imperfect being, it being the next thing to nothing; and thus those moates that fly in the soul, we cannot discern them, unlesse in the Sun-beams, unlesse the Spirit of God by his word do enlighten our souls, though swarmes of these flies are in the heart, yet we perceive them not.

7.  
Satan's tempt-  
ations.

7. Satan he doth very busily assault the people of God and tempt them to sinne: Now he hath no way sooner to overcome them, then by casting a mist before their eyes, or by his cunning devices to beguile the godly, so that they are not able to perceive the sinne, till it be committed: some have had a charitable thought of *Ananias and Saphira*, as if they might be saved for all that great sinne of theirs; but how cometh it about, that they lye and dissemble so much? how is it that they do not perceive the sinfulness of it? It was because

Satan



*Satan had filled his heart*, Acts 5.3. A learned Critick compar-  
eth it with that phrase of being *filled with the holy Ghost*, or  
faith, that as a man filled so, is strongly encouraged, and  
doth not consider the difficulty or dangers in his duty; so  
*Ananias* being filled with the devils suggestions, did not feel  
or fear any remorse of conscience, any anger of God, but was  
fully bent to sinne whatsoever come of it. We have also  
an instance in *David*, he will have the people numbred,  
though *Joab* do never so much dissuade: well, but when he  
hath done, then saith the text, *his heart did smite him*, 1 Sam.  
14.5. then he began to consider that he had sinned, and he  
was greatly afflicted because of it. But why did not *David's*  
heart smite him before, that might have prevented much sinne?  
Its said, *Satan stirred him up to number his people*; so that as  
Juglers and conjurers they delude the senses, and make the  
appearances of things to be when there are no realities; so  
the devil, through his wily and crafty temptations, knowing  
the godly mans disposition, and the fit occasions for sinne, doth  
so darken and becloud his judgement, that he is carried into  
the deep pit before ever he think of it.

Lastly, *One great cause, why so much of the godly mans sinne  
may be hid from his eyes, may be the want of a sound and soul-  
searching Ministry*; That is the light, which makes us see  
those Toads and Serpents, that we could not discover before,  
1 Cor. 14.25. The unbeliever, that comes into the Congre-  
gation, while the word is opened, hath the thoughts of his  
heart manifested, and he falls down and worships God.  
Those that lived under the Pharisees teaching, would never  
have been convinced, that the thoughts and affections of the  
heart were breaches of Gods Law; they did not understand,  
that there was heart-adultery, and heart-murder, as our  
Saviour instructed them: What a world of sinnes may a peo-  
ple live in, for want of a sound and powerfull Ministry? for  
if when the light doth shine, men for all that *love darknesse  
more then light*, and they will presumptuously commit such  
sinnes, that they know to be so, how ready and active must  
they needs be in sinnes they do not know!

8.  
The want of  
a sound and  
searching Mi-  
nistry.

*Use of Exhortation to the godly, That they be not confident in themselves, that they walk with an holy and godly suspicion of themselves; If thou doest not finde multitude of heart-sinnes within thee, even as the sea is full of creeping things, its not because they are not there, but because thou doest not perceive them: What Jacob said in another case, Verily this is the house of God, and I knew it not, thou mayest on the contrary say, Verily my heart is a lodge of unclean thoughts, of proud, earthly thoughts, and I knew it not. If Peter had been thus affected, the devil could not have tempted him to throw himself down from the high pinnacle as he did.*

*Use of Terror, to all those who live in known and convinced sinnes: What, shall David, so greatly bewail, and so heartily beg the pardon of unknown sins? and art thou so obstinate in sinnes thy own heart condemneth thee for! Father forgive them, said Christ, for they know not what they do: but how shall we pray, Forgive them, for they know what they do?*

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S E R M. XXIII.

*Directing a Godly man what to doe,  
who is afflicted under this Considera-  
tion, that he cannot understand all his  
Errors.*

P S A L. 19. 12.

*Cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

WE have already discovered the Grounds, why sinnes may be hidden from a godly mans eyes: We now come to direct to those Duties, which are required of a godly man in this case: For you will presently ask; What then shall a godly man do, if these unknown sinnes may be latent in his breast? when he hath done all, yet he must sit down with doubtings and uncertainties, saying, I may be damned for all my profession hitherto; there may be a crack, a flaw, a leak in me, and I have not yet found it out: Is not this to bring the godly soul into such a wilderness that it can never get out again?

The next thing therefore is to direct to such Duties, as are required of a godly man, afflicted under this consideration, that he cannot understand all his errors. And

1. Therefore it is thy duty, greatly to humble thy self for all thy unknown sinnes. Never to confesse and bewail known sinnes, but at the same time also to go further, and acknowledge all that hidden and undiscovered filthinesse in thee.

For

I.  
Humiliation  
for unknown  
Sinnes.



For as there is no man so learned, but he will bewail his ignorance in many particulars, *Hoc tantum scio, me nihil scire*, said he, so there is no man so holy, but he must also acknowledge a great deal of unholinesse which he doth not finde out; so that he may in some sense say, This is my godlinesse, to bewail my ungodlinesse. So *David* you see gives a pattern in this verse: neither can you say, This may prove a mock-humiliation, and I may thereby bewail a lye, for if I do not know of any sinne in me, it may be there is none, and so I shall bear false witness against my self, and God would not have me to beleieve a lye, that thereby I may seem to be humble: As some Papists expound that of *John*, 1 Joh. 1.8. *If we say we have no sinne, &c.* We must say so (say they) to testifie our humility, though it be not true: but the Apostle doth not say, If we say we have no sinne, there is no humility in us, but there is no truth in us, we do deceive our selves with a lye. Indeed if that opinion of some could be made out, That a man may attain to such a perfection in this life, that he may be without sinne: then in such a case, a man bewailing sinne not discovered, may bewail a non entity, a lye. But that Petition commended to every one in the Lords Prayer, *Forgive us our sinnes*, doth evidently convince the falshood thereof. Seeing then that the heart of man, is never emptied of all this filth; seeing that fountain of blood is never dried up, he need not fear, by confessing the sinne he doth not discover, that he doth witness falsly against himself, for there are the reliques and motions of all evil stirring in every mans heart, as appeareth, *Rom. 7.* which is called the *Law of sinne*. Though therefore a godly man may not know what kinde of sinnes they are which come from him, yet he is assured, that there are sinnes in the generall. If indeed it were a theologicall doubt, whereby a man might justly question, whether any sinne were lurking in him or no, then he might put himself upon the venture of bewailing a lye: but though the particular sinnes cannot be discovered or numbred, yet that there are such is without all doubt: Though *David* could not understand what his errors were, yet he did clearly understand that there were errors.

2. As we are thus to bewail unknown sinnes, so we are diligently to try and search our hearts, that if possible we may bring every hidden sin to light; We must do as the Artificer that puts his mettall to the test or tryall, to see whether it be true or counterfeit, so must thou diligently and constantly examine thy actions, thy affections, thy intentions, thy heart, yea, all thou art and dost, by the Word of God; Bring thy self into the Sun-light continually: We read how the whole community of the people of *Israel* were chastised for *Achans* sinne, *Josh*, 8, A sin they did not know was committed, nor had they any hand in it, insomuch that it is a great Question among Divines, Why the whole body should be so punished for one mans sin, which they did not know or cooperate in: but you see what way they were to take to finde it out, by casting of Lots, at last it came to *Achan* himself; Thus do thou by thy judging and self-examination come nearer and nearer still to finde out every hidden sin in thee; for if through thy negligence and self-love thou art willing to cover and hide thy sinnes from thy own eyes, never think then that thy heart is so upright as it ought to be: If thou wilt not understand thy sinnes for fear they should be a thorn in thy side and a grief to thy eyes, know this is a great discovery of a treacherous and false heart: If with *Rachel* thou sittest upon the Idols, and makest excuses, be sure that Text will finde thee out, *He that bideh his sinne shall not prosper*, *Pro*. 28. 13.

2. Search the heart for hidden sins.

3. As we are to make diligent search for sins that may be latitant in our breasts, so we are to stir up our memory, and to look back to our former lives, that so we may know and bewail those sinnes which are wholly forgotten by us; for in this respect many sinnes are hidden from knowledge; They have been committed many years agoe, in our youth time, in the daies of our vanity and presumption: Now it may be thou hast never had such sinnes in remembrance; To this very day they have not been matter of bitter complaint unto thee, and truly the people of God who are once wrought upon by Gods grace, and put into these spirituall travels of soul, may greatly be affected with those particular sinnes that

3. Look back to our former lives.

lie heavy upon the conscience, but then for many other, especially if long ago committed, they are wholly forgotten; so that through forgetfullnesse there is many a sinne we take no notice of: *David* and *Job* did both complain that *God made them possesse the sinnes of their youth*; and thus the godly should bring to remembrance all the vanity of their former daies: it may be many a sinne, many a debt is there in Gods Book that is not yet cancelled or blotted out; For you must know the Scripture tels us of a Book that God hath, wherein he writeth down all the sinnes we commit: Now it may be there are sinnes that are forty or thirty years ago committed, and God hath them down in his Book, but thou hast clean forgot them as men do old debts, thinking they are paid when they be not; Oh then let the people of God, if they would know all their sins, cast their eyes to their former course of life; what hath been done by thee many years agoe, when a childe, when grown up? It may be, if thou set thy self to it, many things may come to thy memory which thou hast forgotten: We reade of *Josephs* brethren, that they remembred their sinnes against *Joseph* many years afterward, and then their consciences become to be troubled, which before seem stupified, and thus you must know that all sinne once committed stands unblotted out, and is as ready to damn though it be many years since it was committed, as if it was but yesterday; Time that eateth up all things, and devours the strongest things, yet cannot consume sinne, but the guilt of that is as vigorous and damning after many years as if committed but the last hour; so that if the godly would understand their errours as much as may be, let them reflect upon former daies, let them cast their eyes back, and there they shall see many grievous and bad things, it may be; As *Jacob* got a lamenesse in wrestling which made him go halting all his life time; It may be thou hast got such a wound by some sinne that may make thee go halting, bowed down and troubled all thy life time.

4.  
Take notice of  
a twofold Repentance.

4. You are to take notice of a two-fold Repentance, the one is expresse, formall, and particular, the other is implied, virtuell, and habituell. An expresse Repentance is when the sinne is known,



known mentioned, and sorrowed for by particular naming of it. As when *David* bewailed his *blond-guiltinesse*, when *Peter* upon his denying of *Christ* went out, and wept bitterly; and the *Apostle* he reproveth some *Corinthians*, fearing lest when he came, he should not finde them humbled for their uncleannesse, lasciviousnesse, and wantonnesse, 2 *Cor.* 11.21. *Paul* required an expresse, direct repentance of those finnes in particular, by confessing and mentioning the particular vilenesse and lothsomenesse of those sinnes. 2. There is a virtuall and habituall Repentance, whereby a man is prepared and ready to repent of and forsake every sinne that he shall be convinced of, and therefore doth in the generall confesse all those sinnes that may be lurking within, and yet he not discover them; This *David* in the Text speaks of, and and supposeth in other places where he praieth that God would prove him and try him, if there were any falshood in him: Thus among the *Jews* there were sacrifices for such sins that they were ignorant of; and this whether it were for a particular person, or for the whole Congregation, *Numb.* 15.22. so that those sacrifices were by way of caution, of jealousy, that no sin might rest unforgiven unto them; Thus if a man do really repent of what sinnes he doth know, and hath a prepared habit of heart to repent of and forsake all other sinnes when he shall be convinced of them; This man takes the direct way for his peace and comfort.

Hence in the fifth place, Let the childe of God when thus bewailing and examining, and habitually prepared to repent, earnestly and importunately pray unto God for the pardon of those hidden sinnes: As we see *David* here in the Text doth, for if you are only humbled for them, and sue not out for a pardon, you leave your work half-done, you do but goe one mile, where you ought to go two, and this is the very direct duty in the Text; whensoever upon diligent examination thou findest there are still many more sinnes then thou art able to discover, Then go to God saying, O Lord, I know there are many rocks in the Sea of my heart, which because covered by water I may not espy, and so be in danger to split my self; There are many secret and hidden diseases in my soul, which

5:  
Pray for the  
pardon of hid-  
den sins.

Encourage-  
ments for faith  
to beleeve the  
pardon of se-  
cret sins upon  
a generall Re-  
pentance

I.

They are sins  
of daily infir-  
mity.

I cannot finde out; Oh therefore forgive what I know and what I know not, *Cleanse me from open and secret sinnes*; It's a trouble and a heavy grief to me that I cannot finde out all, that still there is more abomination in me then I can discover; but they are not secret or hidden to thee though to me: Thou knowest them though I do not, and therefore O Lord, *cleanse me from them*: Now there are many encouragements why thy faith should be strong to beleeve God will pardon such secret sinnes to thee.

First, *Because they are the sins of daily infirmity coming from us, and for these God giveth a daily pardon*: They are pardon-  
ed of course to the godly; *If we sinne, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*; he doth there especially relate (though not excluding other sinnes) to such sinnes as through an ignorance and humane frailty we cannot possibly escape: Solomon saith, who is there *that sinneth not*, 2 Chro. 6.36. and James, *In many things we offend all*, Jam 3.2. and *If we say we have no sinne we deceive our selves*, 1 Joh. 1. Now many of the godly are preserved from grosse sinnes, they may of a truth say, no such sinnes are in them, but then there are daily sinnes of weaknesse, and the stirrings of corruption in their hearts; Now these God doth constantly pardon upon a generall Petition: He knoweth our sinful temper that we cannot live without this drosse, and therefore he reneweth his forgivenesse every day: *But there are other sins of a more grosse and notorious guilt, if a godly man fall into any such, there must be a more solemn renewed Repentance*, There must be earnest suing out of a more particular pardon, as we see in David and Peter, Though God can as easily forgive great sinnes as lesse sinnes, yet he requireth greater things of us in the way to have pardon for one then the other; Even as we reade of Christ, that though he could by a word cure all diseases as well as some, yet in some, as in raising of *Lazarus* and others, he manifested more expressions, as if in it self it were a greater work though all one to him; So then thou maist well hope to speed, for although there be no sins veniall, such as for their nature are so little that they do not deserve hell, yet God hath so graciously ordered, that such shall

shall not hinder the use and claim of his grace and pardon; They are not such for which God will bid thee keep out of his sight, as *David* did *Absalom* for his rebellion; but he is willing to forgive and communicate his favours though thus unworthy.

Secondly, *Thou maist have a lively faith in such Petitions, because these sinnes are done ignorantly*, for though ignorance doth not excuse a toto, yet it doth a tanto: God doth the rather pity when we do not know our sins, if in the generall we bewail them: *Paul* said, *God had mercy on him because he did it ignorantly*, 1 Tim. I. 13. and *Christ* praieeth, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luke 23. 34. If then God be so gracious as to forgive sinnes, though of knowledge and willingly committed, when truly humbled for, then no doubt he will pardon hidden and secret sins, where he seeth an heart prepared to repent of them if he knew them; Let not then the godly be dejected under this Truth; Oh there may be more sin in me then I am aware of, I may be damned for what I know not; Oh this cannot be, as long as thou makest these generall Petitions unto God, and canst say with *Eliphaz*, *What I know not teach thou me, and if I have offended I will do so no more*, Job 20.

Now to this doctrine or truth, That a generall Repentance is enough for unknown sinnes, we must adde a caution or two: As

1, *This will not hold when we are willfully and industriously ignorant of our sinnes*: When men will not understand that they may do well, then this is a grosse and an affected ignorance: very likely the Pharisees and chief Priests in *Christ's* time did not know that to be true which our Saviour laid to their charge, *That they were ravening wolves*, that their inside was altogether foul and unclean; but were they excused because they thought not of such pollution within themselves? No, in no wise, for they were willfully ignorant; If I had not come unto them they had had no sin, saith *Christ*, yea because they said, they did see and know, therefore their condemnation was the greater; So *Joh. 9. For Iudgement I came into the world, that those which did see might be blinde*,

2.  
These sins are done ignorantly.



and the blinde might see ; Understand then in what case this is true, viz. when we are diligent and desirous to finde out every hidden sinne, we pray, we search, we bring our selves to the light that every thing may be manifested, then God is ready to pardon: but if we refuse the light, are willing to cover and hide our sinnes, then the Scripture speaks of such as are more certainly designed for destruction. Do then as the blinde man, *Ioh 9*. Christ asked him, *If he did beleve in the Son of God: Who is he Lord*, saith the man: so, Dost thou understand and know thy errors? Which are they Lord? say, If I knew them I would abhor them.

2. *Those sinnes that are hidden to us are the more easily pardoned, which are in their own natures lesse discernable*: but if they be sins of such a grosse nature that their guilt may be easily found out, then we are the more inexcusable in such; If a man should think his swearing, his drunkenness, his lusts were not sinnes; This would not help him, to say, I did not know it was a sinne to do so or so, for seeing by ordinary diligence thou maist come to finde out these sinnes, Therefore this fig-leaf will not cover thy nakednesse: No, thy sins are so great, that every eye may see them, such Camels they are that his throat must needs be very wide that can swallow them and not feel them.

3. *Our secret sins will be the sooner forgiven when we have not the means and occasions to finde out the true nature of them*; Thus the Apostle saith, *They that are without the Law shall be judged without the Law*: And thus our Divines say, Negative belief doth not damn; The Heathens shall not be damned for not beleiving in Christ, because they have not the means to know this duty.

4. If thou dost not perceive thy sinnes from a supidity and customarinesse that thou hast in sin, then this doth not excuse but aggravate; As *Aristotle* saith of a drunkard, what mischief he doth in his drunken fits, though he knoweth not, yet he deserveth a double punishment, because he wilfully put himself into such a senselesnesse; The Apostle *Eph 3* speaks of some who were past feeling, and others of a leared conscience; and our Saviour tels us of some that had eyes but

but did not see, hearts but did not understand, now these men committed sinne and they did not feel it, or consider of it: but this aggravated their wickednesse, and not lessened it.

Use of Admonition, to be acquainted with our selves, fear thy unknown sinnes; were thy eyes opened, it may be thou wouldst see armies of lusts coming against thee out of thy own breast: Take heed of self-love and flattery, especially of hiding and covering thy sinnes, that will not prosper long, God will set them in order before thy eyes; what is not known now, will one day be manifested to all the world.

*Use.*



S E R M. XXIV.

*How and by what means the Grace of  
God keeps Godly men from grosse and  
presumptuous Sinnes.*

P S A L. 19. 13.

*Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them  
not have dominion over me, &c.*

**A**lthough my purpose in pitching on this Text was to make a further inquiry into that depth of wickednesse which is in every mans heart, and to direct the godly under their sad temptations in the considerations thereof; yet I cannot but peruse the next verse, which is another particular of Davids petition, arising from the former sad complaint he made ver. 12. so that it would be unmercifull (as it were) to  
separate

separate these two particulars so nearly linked together. Come we then to the second petition that *David* breaketh out into so heartily, from the serious consideration of that unknown evil in him, which is in the Text, *against presumptuous sinnes*. *David* is afraid some unknown sparks of this fire may at last break out into a terrible flame, these Cockatrices egges may for want of discerning hatch flying serpents: So that as the former petition was for pardon, so this for power and strength against sinne. Surely this Text, as it is a faithfull saying, so worthy of all humble and trembling considerations; for it teacheth the godly that it is not their power, their care, their industry, but the meer grace of God that keeps them from most presumptuous and arrogant sinnes: Its not a *Cain* or a *Judas*, not a monster of men, that praies thus to be preserved from daring and bold sins, but *David* a godly tender man, bewailing the sins he did not know; how farre then would he be from wilfull, known sinnes?

In the petition consider, 1. The praier. 2. The object matter of the praier. 3. The modification or qualification of the matter, in what sense he desireth to be preserved from such sinnes. 4. The consequent benefit and advantage.

I shall take these particulars in their order: and first of the prayer it self, *Keep me from presumptuous sinnes*. That mercy he petitioneth, is, to be kept, to be preserved from grosse sinnes. The Hebrew word doth signifie what a proclivity and inclination there is even to the worst of sinnes, if the Spirit of God doth not keep and restrain, even as the horse without a bridle, would rush into all violence. So that it implieth even the very godly have such untamed and unruly hearts, that unless, the Spirit of God put a bridle upon them, they would sinne in a bold and presumptuous manner. Observe,

*Observ.*

The meer grace of God preserves even godly men from presumptuous sins.

That its not the godly mans own care and indeavours do preserve him from horrible presumptuous sins, but Gods grace meerly. *David* himself is a sad instance of this, for although he thus affectionatly doth here pray unto God, yet in the matter of *Uriah*, we there see many grosse and deliberate counsels to accomplish his designed lusts; oh there the *Philistims* were upon



upon this *Sampson*, and his strength was gone, there presumptuous sinnes did for a while prevail over him.

Before we come to shew what is the particular manner whereby the grace of God keeps the godly from presumptuous sins, you must take notice that God may so preserve a man from sin two waies, either *externally* or *internally*; externally by meer restraint, or some mighty interposition of God, as we see in the matter of *Abimelech*, whom God kept from violating of *Sarah*: and thus he did keep *Jeroboam* from doing violence to the Prophet, by causing his arm to wither: and thus in the general God by his providence doth restrain all the malice and pernicious purposes of wicked men; he keeps them from sinnes, such as they incline unto, and study to contrive but cannot, even as he hath put bounds unto the sea, that it doth not overflow the banks. Thus he is said to *fashion the hearts of men, to put hooks into their nostrils*, and that it is *not in man to order his own waies*: yea thus God restraineth the devils themselves, that they cannot do so much wickedness as they desire. Its the observation of a Learned man, that *Julian*, who did so much desire to foreknow things, and accomplish designs, by compact with the devils, yet could never obtain his desire. Now God keeps these from sin, not out of any love to them, but to his Church and the world, that humane societies be not destroyed, and his Church overwhelmed. Of this kinde of restraint from sinne, as when a Lion or Mastive dog are tied up from doing hurt, I do not intend to speak; but of a gracious and fatherly preserving from sin, which God vouchsafeth unto the godly, because of the Covenant of grace, and that his love is fastned on them; and its good to consider wherein the particulars of this grace do shew themselves.

As first, *Its seen in some remarkable things internally, and then externally*. The particulars whereby God works on the soul, so that a godly man is preserved from sinne, are many: And

1. *A clear illumination and conviction of the heart concerning sinne, the nature of it, the aggravations of it, and the wofull consequents thereof*. This clear light of the minde is apt to produce

God graciously preserves his people from sinne.

I.

By internall helps, as

I.

By illumination and conviction.

produce great heat in the heart; yea its the opinion of some Learned men, That the practical dictates of the understanding are so forcible and cogent, that the Will doth necessarily follow in obedience: But that I cannot subscribe to; howsoever this is certain, That clear and certain illumination of the minde is very apt and potent to turn about the whole heart; and therefore in conversion, God doth first give light to the *understanding*, and the Spirit of God doth first *convince of sin*, and then of *righteousness*. Hence it is that David doth so often pray to have his *eyes opened*; and the Church is advised to get *eye-salve*, Rev. 3. as a special way to recover out of sinne; even as on the contrary, darknesse in the understanding, and blindnesse of minde, doth cause men to stumble and fall; therefore wicked men are said not to know God, because the *acknowledging of truth after godlinesse*, would make new heavens and a new earth, as it were, within us.

2.  
By corroborating and strengthening the Will against sinne.

2. Gods grace keepeth us from wilfull sinnes, by corroborating, and strengthening the will, that it will not easily yield and consent unto sinne. And this is a precious mercy, when our strength is not departed from us. The Apostle prayeth that they may be *strengthened with grace in the inner man*, Eph. 3. and he saith, *He can do all things through Christ that strengthens him*. Its weaknesse and feeblenesse of heart many times, that makes the godly fall into the mire: Peter wanted spirituall fortitude within, when he denied Christ. Those then whom God preserveth from presumptuous sinning, he vouchsafeth courage and boldnesse unto them; they are like *mount Zion*, Ps. 125. 1. that the windes and storms cannot stir them out of their places.

3.  
By making the heart tender.

3. Grace preserveth from presumptuous sinnes, by making the heart tender and pliable, mollified and soft. As at our first conversion God removeth the stone out of the heart, and giveth it tendernesse and softnesse, so that we may not apostatize or fall off from God again, so it preserveth the same tenderneſs in us. *Josephs* heart was in a tender, sensible apprehension, when he said, *How can I do this and sinne against God!* On the other side, the more benumbed and stupified any mans heart is, the more desperate a man is in sinning. There is no wickednes

kedness so hainous, but an hardened heart dares commit it, as we see in *Pharaoh* and the *Jews*: And on the other side, there is no sin so little, but a tender heart is afraid of it, as we see in *David*, when he cut off *Sauls garment*; and in the matter of that water, he would not drink it, for which men had jeopardised their lives; so that there is no such sure antidote against the plague of all sin, as to keep the heart tender, and apt to feel the weight of the least sinne, for if little ones be a burden, how much more will greater ones be?

4. Grace doth preserve the godly from presumptuous sins, by daily quickning and enlivening the principles of grace to the actual exercise thereof. So that while they are in constant operation, all sinne and iniquity is shut out. We have heretofore told you, that besides the principles of grace, inherent in us, there needeth a daily exciting and quickning of Gods grace also, without which a man may commit great and grievous sinnes, notwithstanding that root within: Indeed its said, *He that is born of God, cannot commit sin, because the seed abideth in him*, 1 John 3.9. but that is meant of such habituated and rooted sin, that is incompatible with godlinesse, otherwise the seed of grace was in *David* and *Peter*, notwithstanding that grosse gradual apostacy; as there is hidden life in trees, though in the midst of winter they seem dead: but when this seed of grace is quickned and stirred up, then sinne doth the more difficultly enter: The cessation therefore or the sleep of grace, makes such a sad confusion in the whole man, as *Christs* sleeping in the Ship, did to the Ship. Hence we have *David* praying so often, that God would quicken him; when therefore the godly would be kept pure and free from every arrogant transgression, let them pray, that the grace of God may be breathing and alwaies blowing upon them; let them desire that the Spirit of God may do that to their souls, which *Eliabs* application of himself did to the dead childe, never leave till life and breath come into them. While the streams of water flow and are in constant motion, they are preserved pure and clear, but when made a sluggish pool, then frogs and toads breed in them: The daily breathing of grace upon the heart, are like the winnowings of the

4.  
By inclining  
the principles  
of grace unto  
actual exercise.



Corn, that drive away the chaff, like the filing of Iron, that keeps off all the rust.

5.  
By stirring up  
the love of  
God and the  
fear of God.

5. God by his grace doth inwardly preserve from sinne, when he stirreth up those two great affections in a right manner, viz. the love of God and the fear of God, both which will strongly resist any lusts of sinne. The love of God and Christ, where that is shed abroad in the heart, doth constrain a man to duty, 1 Cor. 4. As she said to Sampson, *How canst thou say, thou lovest me, and yet wilt not discover this thing to me?* So doth God say, *How canst thou say, thou lovest him, and yet do such things as offend me?* When Christ would put Peter upon all his duty, he still asketh him, *Peter Lovest thou me?* John 21. 16. *Lovest thou me?* as if wheresoever the love of God were, there would be a constant care to do all things pleasing to him. And what was it that made Abraham so willingly offer up his only son, in all those aggravations of his obedience? it was only love; Now (saith God) *I know thou lovest me.* Thus while the heart of a man is kept up with hot burning love of God and Christ, being exceedingly ravished with all the gracious effects of the Gospel, he can no more close with sin, then the fire can freez a man. And as love is thus potent, so the fear of God in an holy and due manner, is an admirable preserver of the soul from such presumptions: The Midwives feared God, and that made them not obey Pharaohs cruel commands, Exod. 1. So Nehemiah carried himself in that holy and gracious manner, not exacting and oppressing, as other Governours had done, because he feared God, Neh. 7. 2. and God promiseth to put his fear in our hearts, that so we may not depart from him, Jer. 31.

6.  
By keeping up  
our faith.

6. One main and principall manner by which God keepeth from sin, is by keeping up faith in us: He keepeth us by keeping faith in us: We have a full instance of this concerning Peter, *I have praied, saith Christ, that thy faith may not fail,* Luke 22. 32. Why his faith? because as long as that was operative and working, so long sin would be subdued. When we lose faith, we are as Saul that lost his spear, all our power against sin is taken away, the gates are then set open, the enemy may come in when he will: Therefore the Apostle

above

above all things bids us take the shield of faith, *Super*, as great as a door to cover us all over, *Ephes. 6.* The devil, though a roaring lion, runneth away when faith is put forth: As it's said, *Christ could do no miracle in a certain place, because of their unbelief.* Mark 6. 5, 6. he could not, i. e. he would not: but here the devil can do nothing against the godly, because of their faith: Even fiery darts are quenched by this faith, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *We are kept by the power of God through faith.*

Lastly, God preserveth us, by affecting with a sweet and delightful frame of heart in what is good: He puts such joy and peace in our spirits, that we easily see every sin comes to tempt us to our losse, we are better as we are; Gods loving kindnesse is better then life; many live, but are weary of life, cry out for death; yea the damned live, therefore Gods loving kindnesse is better then all.

Thus you see how the grace of God doth preserve from sinne by inward operation: Now let us consider what outward helps there are: And

1. *The preaching of the Word*, is blessed to the godly, as a speciall means against all sin; they finde the Ministry to be a continual dropping upon them, that they should not degenerate into a wilderness; they find this to be like blowing up coals alwaies upon the Altar of a mans heart; for if the word preached be so instrumentall to convert, and to put life at first into men dead in their sinnes; no wonder if it be effectually also to quicken up, and inflame in godlinesse. *Ezek. 18.* you see a righteous man, by the Prophets warning, is kept from severall transgressions, which would be his ruine, and the righteous man needeth warning as well as the wicked: In Paradise, there the ground needed not the clouds to drop on it, there came waters out of the midst of it to water that Garden: Thus in heaven the Ministry and these Ordinances will cease, but here all the godly need the instruction, and the reproof of it, and therefore the godly can no more live without it, then their bodies can be sustained without food. Thus the spirituall watchman makes them stand upon their guard; they finde the Word preached a goad in their side, and fire in their bosoms, that they cannot hold their peace.

7.  
And delight in  
that which is  
good.

2.  
Outward helps

1.  
The Preaching  
of the Word.

2. *God doth lay afflictions upon them to humble them and keep them low, and this is a special help against sinne. Before I was afflicted, I went astray, said David, Pl. 119. 67. and Every branch in me, my Father purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit, John 15.* So that God doth hereby preserve his people from presumptuous sinnes, by daily chastisements, by constant purifying them in the fire, or purging them by water; all the troubles and afflictions which come upon them are for this very end to mortifie sin; they are let blood to cool them of hot feaverish lusts.

3. *God keeps them from presumptuous sinnes, by removing the temptations and occasions thereunto.* Oh should not God keep off the snare from us, many a time would the godly mans soul be endangered: Hence are we taught to pray so effectually, that God would *not lead us into temptation*, for little do we know what lusts such warm beams will presently inliven in us. It was a temptation of the eye did first undo *Eve*, and in her all mankind: It was a temptation that brought *David* into the mire, that cast down *Peter* so grievously; our hearts are as stubble, when the sparking fire of a temptation falls upon them.

Reasons why a godly man cannot keep himself from presumptuous sinnes.

I. Because of the reliques of sin left in them.

Now the ground why Gods grace, and not the godly mans wisdom or power, doth preserve him from such apostacy, is, *Because of those reliques of lusts that do still cleave to every regenerate man.* This hair of *Sampson* would grow again, and be as strong as ever, if God did not daily help and preserve: In heaven indeed there will be no need of this petition, no fear of such sins, because that flux of blood will be dried up, but here as long as the nest and womb of sin is, there will be lusting and conceiving, and bringing forth. We see what confidence *Peter* had of his love and perseverance, yet he grossely fell, not knowing how quickly those sparks would break out into a flame; its grace therefore that keeps that old wound from festring and increasing.

Use.

Use of Exhortation to the godly, Write after this copy which *David* hath set us, Doth a man after Gods own heart so affectionately pray against presumptuous sins? Take heed then that God doth not leave thee, be jealous of thy self, de-

fire



fire the spirit of God to be alwaies breathing upon thee ; Into what dungeon maist thou not fall, In what mire maist thou not quickly be wallowing, if the grace of God uphold thee not ? Take heed of grieving this Spirit of God which putteth all life and strength into thee : When you see men grow secure, loose, and carelesse about duties, or sin, then think such an one is a Tree removed from the waters side, first, his fruit will fall, and then his very leaves, first his godlinesse, and then the very profession and name of it.



S E R M. XXV.

*Of Presumptuous Sins that Gods People should chiefly pray against.*

P S A L. 19. 13.

*And keep me from presumptuous sinnes that they prevail not over me.*

THE next thing in order to be considered is the object matter of this Petition, viz. presumptuous sins.

As in the verse before we told you in the Originall was only *secret* or *hidden*, our Translators adde *faults*, so here in the Hebrew is only *presumptuous* or *proud* ; for many do translate it, Keep me *a superbiis* from proud and arrogant waies : Hence some Commentators think the Psalmist speaks of persons and not of sinnes, as if he did pray to be delivered from proud and arrogant persons, that they might not domineer over him, but the context doth easily confute this ; Therefore our English Translators do well supply *sinnes* for a Substantive to that Adjective *presumptuous*, now what presumptuous sins will appear in the pursuing of the doctrine, which is, That though a godly man cannot be without sinne in this life,

Observ.

life, yet he is greatly to be afraid of presumptuous sinnes, or rather thus, *There are sins of presumption which a godly man is especially to pray and watch against*; These are such spots that should not be in Gods Children; and indeed it's disputed whether the godly can fall into presumptuous sins, so that they should reign over him, but this will appear in the sequel.

What sins are presumptuous sins.

I.  
Sins committed against full and clear knowledge & conviction of conscience.

I shall at this time discover the nature and ingredients, or concomitants of presumptuous sins.

And First, *Presumptuous sinnes are usually committed against full and clear knowledge and conviction of conscience*: When men are convinced in their conscience and informed, These things that I do are sinnes, I venture the damnation of my soul by such unlawfull waies, this man sinneth presumptuously: Thus the sinnes of the Pharisees were presumptuous sinnes because they did obstinately rebell against that clear light Christ discovered, They could not tell what to say, They were often convinced, and yet they would maliciously oppose him, so that ignorant and weak people are not so apt to throw themselves headlong this steep hill, as men of knowledge and understanding are; Oh that the ears would tingle, and the hearts tremble of all such who live in sinne against their knowledge and conscience, for is not this the case of thousands? Who are so blinded in judgement, so darkened in minde, that they knew not those grosse waies they live into be sinne? Dost thou not know thou oughtst not to lye, swear, be drunk, deal unjustly? and yet thou runnest into such bogs; I tell thee to thy rerroure thy sinnes are presumptuous sinnes, Thou art a presumptuous sinner, Thou that knowest the contrary, and thy conscience tells thee to the contrary, yet thou wilt violently passe on, Worse then *Barlaam* in this respect, for he presseth violently on, and though the Ass dared not go on, yet still he endeavours to put forward, till he saw the Angell with a naked sword before him; Now thou wilt in a brutish and most unfavoury manner rush into thy sins, though thou seest the naked sword before thee, though thy conscience discover the nature and filth of thy doings, yet thou wilt not give over; It had been better thou hadst

hadst never been a man, never been born, then to be such a presumptuous wretch; *He that knoweth his Masters will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*, Luke 12.47. Hell will be heated seven times hotter for such proud and arrogant sinners as thou art.

Secondly, *The more willfulnesse and resolved deliberation there is in sinne, this makes it the more presumptuous*: When they cannot pleade excuses, bring pretences, only they will follow their lusts, as those to whom *Jeremy* preached, exhorting them to turn every one from his evil way, but they said, No, *They would walk every one after the imagination of his own heart*, Jer. 18.12. What made the sinnes of the devil so heinous that God did cast them for ever into those chains of darknesse? Even because they were meerly willfull in their sinnes; They had no ignorance in minde, no perturbation by passions; There was no tempter to deceive them, as *Eve* had, but they sinned willfully out of meer and pure choice; That Text *Heb. 10.26*. stands like a Beacon on the hill to awaken all: *If we sinne wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, There remaineth no more sacrifice for sinne, &c.* I know this is applied by many to the sinne against the holy Ghost, and so it is very probable, yet it also proveth that all willfull sinnes committed with resolutenesse and obstinacy, are of a very bloody nature, and do endanger the soul in a very high degree; And yet how frequent are these presumptuous sinnes, men sinning meerly because they will: The word is against them, God is against them, Their own consciences against them, yet men will rebell and disobey how dear soever it costeth them; This is the condition of many of our hearers, look about you, see if it be not meer will and obstinacy that hurrieth many into these bogs of sins, They willfully go after the imaginations of their own hearts: *Our tongues are our own, who shall controll us?* said the Psalmist Was the presumptuous speech of some wicked men, *Psal. 12*. Sins of ignorance and involuntary sins committed without or against our wills, these cannot be called presumptuous.

2.  
Sins committed with willfulnesse and resolved deliberation.

3.  
Plotted and contrived sins.

3. *The more premeditation, deliberation, and studied contrivances*  
Ee



vances there are to accomplish sin, the more presumption there is in it: Thus the Pharisees were presumptuous in their crucifying of Christ, for they plotted and contrived it: It was the design they had for a long while together; So Josephs brethren sinned presumptuously against him, because they made it their businesse; They consulted together how to betray the innocent: And on the other side where men are surprised suddenly, and they are led aside by those sinnes they never intended, yea, their purpose and prayers were against them, such do not sin presumptuously; Thus Peter, though his Apostacy and Fall was very dreadfull and terrible, yet because it was a sudden surprise; It was that which the fixed purpose of his heart was wholly against, therefore he did not sin presumptuously: Of a godly man we have no example of such premeditated and deliberate sinning, as in David, we shall see him with all craft and subtlety studying how to accomplish most grosse sins, which the very light of nature would condemn, and when he hath done them, we see him covering and excusing of them; Here was no sudden surprise upon David: He that at another time said, *His meditation was in the Law of God day and night*, doth as often exercise himself in the lusts of sinne: Many times length of daies doth abate the fury of a lust, or there come in seasonable and powerfull considerations, like Abigail to stop David from his intended wickednesse; but if a man do not let once, but again and again the Sun to go down upon his wickednesse, then this argueth the more presumption in his wickednesse.

4. The more a man is free from all perturbation of passions, the more sedate and composed he is, and yet will stretch out his hand to wickednesse; the more presumption is in that sin. Sins done out of passion though they do not or ought not to excuse, yet they do diminish from the arrogancy and presumption in sinning: Thus Aarons consent to make an Idoll, though a grievous sin, yet because over-powered by the people, was the more excusable: Moses because his sin was through passion, God did forgive it, yet that it did not excuse, is plain, because God would not let him enter into Canaan: Peters denial

niall of Christ was in a Passion of fear, but Judas had no passion upon him, he was in a composed quiet frame, and yet through the lusts of his heart did manifest himself so wickedly : Consider then, the lesse passion or perturbation there is upon thy soul, and yet thou art ready to spit thy venome ; Thou wilt sting though not provoked ; Here is the greater measure of presumption in thy rebellion.

5. *The more men sinne that have no externall temptation either of pleasures or terrours, those have the more presumption in their sinne :* As passions and perturbations from within, so externall temptations from without do much take off from the presumption in sinning, for that temptations are mighty strong to overthrow even the godly as well as the hypocrite, appeareth by that speciall direction to pray against temptations and Gods speciall promise to preserve therein. David in many externall temptations and pressures that were upon him, runneth into many unlawfull shifts, yea, Abraham and Isaac by an externall temptation dissemble and equivocate, because of too much worldly fear within them : We reade in Antiquity of many Christians who grievously relapsed in the daies of those bloody persecutions, yet because such apostacies were extorted by tyrannicall violence, The Orthodox thought it their duty to receive such upon their repentance to Christian fellowship and communion ; There is a great difference when a man sinneth from his own habituated principles in wickednesse, and from the over-powring force of some importunate temptation : A temptation depriveth a man for the time of his own self ; He is not the man he was, like Noah overwhelmed with too much wine, he knoweth not what he doth : You see Iron by the fire may be put out of its hard and intractable nature, you may beat it into this form or that form ; And so it is here, even the most upright and true-hearted godly man may be quite put out from his genuine and true disposition, by some enticing or terrifying temptation.

5.

When they sin without temptations.

6.

When a man sins against expresse admonitions, commands and reproofs.

6. *The more a man sinneth against expresse admonitions, commandments, and reproofs, the more presumptuous he is in his sinning :* Such an one cannot pleade, that he had none to warn

him, none to instruct him, and therefore when he sinneth he hath the lesse excuse; What made *Saul's* sinne in sacrificing and in sparing the fattest of the spoil, such a presumptuous sinne; That it's said to be rebellion in a speciall manner, and such rebellion as was worse then witchcraft? was it not because *Samuel* had given him expresse commandment to the contrary? so that the more powerfull admonitions, instructions, and reproofs thou hast to the contrary, the greater is thy presumption in disobeying, *Deut. 1. 43.* The people of *Israel* are there charged for their rebellion, and that they went presumptuously up to the hill, and why so? when God commanded them not to go, and fight against their enemies, they would go, but *Moses* bid them they should not, yet for all this expresse prohibition, they went presumptuously, and smarted for their foolish rebellion; so that what heresie is in matter of doctrine, the same is presumption in matter of practice. After the first or second admonition, an erroneous person manifests himself to be hereticall, obstinate and self-willed: And thus it is here; After severall reproofs and instructions, if thou still persist in thy wickednesse, let thy sinne be never so little, thou sinnest presumptuously in so doing; so that by this it appeareth, all those who live under the powerfull preaching of the word, where such sinnes as the auditory are most guilty of, are constantly reprov'd and condemned, such sinners are presumptuous sinners: Oh consider this and tremble, all ye who have heard those particular sinnes, those very lusts thou livest in, particularly mentioned; there is not a Sabbath day, a Sermon scarce but brings thy sinne to remembrance; know thou, that thou sinnest presumptuously, thou hatest reproof; Who is the Lord, or his messenger, that thou should regard him? Oh beleve it, Thou wilt finde no excuse for thy self, God will judge thee as a presumptuous sinner: Thou art a presumptuous drunkard, a presumptuous curser and swearer, for these things have been often reprov'd and yet thou hast hardened thy neck: Take heed lest after this very Sermon and notice thou hast had, presumption be not in an higher manner laid to thy charge.



7. Then do we sinne presumptuously, when notwithstanding all our wickednesse and impenitency, we imbolden our selves, as if it should be well with us for all this: As if we should not be punished here, or damned hereafter, though we walk thus contrary to God. God hath commanded the Ministers of the Gospel to proclaim, and say to the righteous it shall be well them, but to the wicked it shall be ill with him, but the presumptuous man he will not beleieve this, he thinketh God loveth him, and his blessings shall be upon him, though thus discovered in iniquities: and this is that indeed, which Divines do properly call presumption, when men do expect such a glorious and blessed end, yet never use or perform the meanes tending thereunto. Thus the devil tempted Christ to presumption, when he would have perswaded him to throw himself from the pinnacle: and thus Moses describeth such a presumptuous man, that when the threatnings and curses of the Law shall be read, yet he shall blesse himself in his heart saying, None of these things do belong to him, *Deut. 29. 19, 20, 21.* and who can mourn enough, to see such grosse presumptuous sinners every where? for thou who art a known sinner, what makes thee bear up thy heart? what causeth thee to go up and down with joy and boldnesse? why doest thou not cry out with fear, lest every night the devils do not come to fetch thy soul away? why art thou not afraid to tread on the ground, lest that swallow thee up? to be in thy house, lest the pillars thereof break and crush thee into pieces? Why art thou thus senselesse? Is not all because thou blessest thy self, and flatterest thy self, though God abhorreth thee? Oh when wilt thou judge thy self, and passe that censure upon thy condition, which God himself doth, were it not for sinfull presumption in thee thou wouldst be a trembling *Cain*, thy conscience and heart tells thee of all that wickednesse thou art privy unto, that were it not thou makest such false hopes to thy self, thou couldst not refrain a moment from crying out, Oh I fear I shall be damned, I shall be damned: Oh take heed then of this desperate presumption, which makes thy condition indeed hopelesse, while it is upon thee, though thou art full of

7. When notwithstanding his impenitency he promisseth happiness to himself.

vain and false hopes: Is it not enough to be such a brutish sinner, such a notorious rebell to God, but thou must add presumptuous thoughts to all these things, saying it shall be well with thee howsoever? Oh do not these abominable things in such a presumptuous manner.

8.  
When men proceed in wickedness notwithstanding Gods judgements are upon them.

8. *Then men sinne presumptuously, when notwithstanding Gods judgements are upon them, yet they care not, but proceed wickedly in their wayes:* and this must needs be a sure discovery of presumption; for if while the rod is upon the back, and the smart is felt, they will persist in their rebellion, what hope can there be, when the scourge is moved? Thus *Pharaoh* was an arrogant presumptuous sinner, for though God did severall times in such a dreadfull and unusuall manner punish him, yet he will not let the people go. Thus *Ahaz* was a presumptuous sinner, because under all his calamities, he yet added to his wickedness; therefore the Scripture saith, *This is that Ahaz*, 2 Chron. 20. 22. that presumptuous incorrigible sinner. Oh then judge of your presumption by the afflictions God layeth upon you: If thou hast been often chastised, the hand of God hath been upon thee severall wayes, yea yet his hand is stretched out still, and thou for all this doest not care for these blowes, art not afraid, but venturest impudently upon thy sinnes; then know, thou art arrived to an high degree of rebellion against God.

9.  
When men are habituated to do wickedly, that makes them sin presumptuously.

9. *When men have a long while accustomed themselves to any sinfull way. so that now they are rooted and habituated in it, this makes them sinne presumptuously:* Then they are become black-mores that cannot easily change their skin: when the devil hath possessed them from the youth up, then it must be much fasting and prayer that can dispossesse him; such mountains are a long while digging up and removing away: sinne and the devil do by degrees strongly harden men; that as the devil possessing the bodies of men, filled them with boldness and presumption, making them runne into the fire and the water, thus when he filleth the heart of a wicked man, he maketh him bold to commit the vilest and most abominable crimes.

10.  
Then men are

Lastly, *Then men are presumptuous sinners, when they boast*  
and

and brag of their iniquities. As Sodom and Gomorha did proclaim their impieties, and the Israelites were not ashamed when they had done evil, but made their foreheads like brasse. Thus the whore is made by Solomon to be an impudent presumptuous sinner: And are there not many such hoggs and doggs, for to such the Scripture compareth them, that at noon-day will tumble in their mire? They have lost all shame and modesty: they boast of their ungodly deeds: they make a mock of their sinnes: they laugh at and despise all admonition.

Use of Instruction; Let it be thy fear, thy care, thy prayer, not to fall into presumptuous sinnes: How terrible and dreadfull this is, will appear by the next. In the meantime, know that all you who live in the customary committing of all known grosse sinnes, and that under the light of the Gospel, you sinne more or lesse presumptuously; you cannot plead ignorance, temptations, passions, but its your habituated, rooted wickednesse, that driveth you thus headlong: If you had faith but like a grain of mustard-seed, it would make you other men: you could not hear so much, know so much, be convinced so much as you are, and yet commit such sinnes, but that high presumption doth reign in you. Well: at the day of judgement, or it may be in this life, when God shall set thy sinnes before thee, that lofty, proud heart of thine will shake like a leaf.





## SERM. XXVI.

*The Ingredients and Aggravations of  
Presumptuous Sinnes.*

PSAL. 19. 13.

*And keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, &c.*

**Y**OU have heard what are presumptuous sinnes, and when men sin presumptuously; let us now consider the ingredients or concomitant dispositions of those who do thus offend, because such bitter streams could not flow but from a bitter spring: It is a prave and ill-disposed heart that breaks out into such proud and arrogant actions; you may indeed see the outward conversation of this presumptuous sinner, and lament over it, but the inward part of that man is farre more abominable: were his heart and inwards discovered these would be more vile, and horrid then any outward transgressions: And

Ingredients,

I.

Pride and  
haughtinesse.

I. A notable ingredient to presumptuous sinning, is, *Pride and haughtinesse of minde*; these can never be separated, pride and presumption in offending. Hence the Hebrew expression to sinne presumptuously, is with an *hand and heart lifted up*; as if they would say, Who is God, and what is he that we should regard him? Thou couldst never act so much wickednesse in such an obstinate way; did not thy soul swell with pride, as the toad with poison. The Scripture doth fully testifie this, *Isa. 9. 9.* Those that would build themselves houses in despite of Gods judgements, and whether he would or no, as it were, did intend to exalt themselves: All that they

they said to this purpose was in the pride and stoutnesse of their heart; so again *Jerem. 17.17.* where the Prophet plainly and powerfully preaching unto them, saith, *If ye will not hearken, my soul shall weep in secret for your pride,* that was the cause and fountain of all. If therefore it be asked, Why is it, such men, though they hear so much, know so much, understand so much, yet will not humble themselves and submit to Christs commands? it is because of their pride and loftinesse, they know not how to stoop and yield unto God. Thus *Dan. 5.20.* The Kings heart is said to be *hardned in his pride.*

2. *Hardnesse of heart and sensesnesse.* that is another cause of presumptuous sinning; for what do such fear what restraint is laid upon them? they have no bridle to keep them back: This is called a *seared conscience*, *1 Tim. 4.2.* that feel-eth no pain; such are said, *Ephes. 4.19* to be *past feeling*: Now a man that can feel no pain, if you lay firebrands to his naked flesh, he careth not; Thus it is with men presumptuously offending, discover unto them all the wrath of God, carry them to the very brinks of hell, bid them see and hear all the howling and raving of persons damned there, you move them not at all, for they are past feeling; these are Idol-sinners, that have *eyes and see not, hearts and understand not.* *2 Pet. 2.10.* those persons that are called presumptuous, are said to be also like *bruit beasts*, that understand nothing: And are there not many sad objects of this nature every where? they are no more apprehensive or sensible of their sins, and the terrible aggravations of them, then the very bruit beasts are: they get no more good by a Sermon, they are as stupid, and devoid of all understanding: Oh its no marvell thou makest such a sport and delight in thy sins, that thou bidst thy self eat and drink and be merry, and take thy mirth in this world, for thou art become like a bruit beast, not only in thy filthy sinnes, but in thy grosse stupidity: where therefore we see a people, though great sinners, yet trembling at Gods Word, melting and ready to cry out because of Gods threatnings, here is some hope; but of all men those are most incurable, who are bold and presumptuous to commit any grosse wickednesse, and yet have no terror or sense about it.

2.  
Hardnesse of  
heart.

3.  
Scorn and derision of all reproof.

3. *Scorn and derision of all reproofs and wholesome admonitions*; This will alwaies accompany a presumptuous sinner, such were those scoffers and deriders that *Peter* speaks of, *2 Pet. 3.3.* who said, *Where is the day of his coming?* do not all things continue as they were? Its not enough with them to sinne, but they make a mock and jeer even at the very Scripture, and the powerfull dispensation of those truths therein. Thus the Pharisees, who sinned with so high an hand, they despised and scorned at Christ; and the Prophet complaineth of those scorers, that mocked the Prophets with *the burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord*, because the Prophets used it so often, *Jer. 23.34.* As wicked men now adaies will mock at the name of hell and damnation, &c. because they hear of it so often; these are swine, that when men throw a pearl to them, they rise up, and tear the persons who do it: Oh take heed of sitting in the councell of these scorers, God will one day laugh and mock at their destruction, as *Prov. 1.*

4.  
Contempt of God and man.

4. *Contempt of God and man*; this is involved in presumptuous sinnes, Contempt of God; for wherein can they manifest their despising of God and his commands more, then knowingly and wilfully to do contrary to what he would have them? God told *Ely*, he despised him, and honoured his sonnes, *1 Sam. 22.29.* more then him, and yet we cannot say, *Ely* sinned presumptuously; how much rather then may we say of bold and obstinate sinners, They despise God, and they honour their base lusts before him? *Numb. 15.30.* the man that doth ought presumptuously, is said to reproach God: There is a kinde of blasphemy against God in every presumptuous sinne, sometimes verball with the tongue, but alwaies reall with the hand: Oh that thou shouldst not fear some remarkable and astonishing judgement should surprize thee, for thy drunkenesse is not only drunkenesse, but it's blaspheming drunkenesse, because committed so boldly; its a reproach and a contempt put upon God, and God takes it so from thee; Oh if there were but sparks and a grain of any grace or modesty in thee, thou wouldst not indure to be such a son of *Belial*. There is also contempt of Men, for they bear no respect to them, though they know such wilfull wickednesse doth



doth grieve the godly, afflict the heart of the godly Ministers, though their examples encourage others, and draw many to heil with themselves, yet they contemn all these things. Ob consider, that the wicked shall one day rise up to everlasting reproach and contempt; then God and the holy Angels, yea all the world shall reproach and contemn thee, as one adjudged to everlasting wrath.

5. *There is commonly security also in presumptuous sinnes.* Men applaud and blesse themselves, their hearts are closed with farnesse, all things are as they would desire, *Nihil infelicius homine semper felici.* And thus their great unhappinesse lieth in their happinesse: This made the Psalmist say of such, *They go down quick into the grave*, because their destruction is so sudden and unexpected, a whirlwinde taketh them away, while they were sporting themselves with sinne. Thus the old world was said to have corrupted all its waies before God, *Genes. 6. 11.* that is, in the very face and eye of God, they did not fear nor dread his power, and then the flood came and swept them away, while they were eating and drinking, living in all manifestations of security: Thus presumptuous sinners are said to *make a covenant with hell and death*, *Isa. 28. 15.* as if these should not hurt them; and indeed a man could never be brought to sin presumptuously, were not the thoughts of death, hell and the day of judgement quite stricken out of his minde: Take the bridle out of his mouth, and he will runne headlong any steep hill.

Lastly, *In presumptuous sinnes, we attribute much to our own thoughts, our own apprehensions, not beleeving the Scripture:* And this is especially seen in those presumptuous sins which are in matter of opinions and doctrines concerning Religion; for you must know, *That not only the grosse prophane sinner, may sin presumptuously, but the false prophet, the false teacher, the heretique, he sinneth presumptuously*, because he doth boldly and impudently vent that for Gods truths, which are nothing but the impostures of his own heart. *Deut. 16. 22.* the false prophet that foretold that which God had not revealed to him, is said to *speak presumptuously*. Thus *1 Pet. 2.* Those false teachers that bring in damnable heresies, are called pre-

5.  
Security.

6.  
Attributing  
much to our  
own thoughts  
and apprehen-  
sions, not be-  
lieving the  
Scripture.

*sumptuous and self-willed*: And no wonder if this be called a presumptuous sinne, for what can be greater impudence then to counterfeit this Divine Coin? to take away the live childe, and put a dead one in the room? to make our own fancies and carnall suggestions, divine revelations and inspirations? God would have the beast that touched the mountain to be stoned to death: but greater is thy presumption, *when thou makest thy own thoughts and opinions the Word of God, and thy own will a law and a Bible to thy self.*

7.  
Shamelesnesse  
and boldnesse.

The aggravations of presumptuous sin.

I.  
Its a daring  
God to do his  
worst.

We might adde another ingredient, which is, *shamelesnesse and boldnesse*, to have foreheads of brasse and iron, but that hath been touched on already.

In the next place let us consider the aggravation of this presumptuous sinne: And

1. *Its a daring, and as it were, braving God, provoking him to do his worst, what care they*: Therefore the Hebrew expression for a sinne committed presumptuously is, *Before the Lord, Nimrod was a mighty Hunter before the Lord, or in the face of the Lord. Genes. 38.7. Er, Judahs eldest son, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord slew him*: Its not said what his sinne was, Commentators have several conjectures; but that phrase denoteth, he was a bold, presumptuous, impudent sinner. Amongst men its accounted great presumption in their inferiours, if they offend while their superiours look on them, they care not though they see them: Oh then let thy heart be at last filled with terror and amazement for thy wilfull wickednesse: Do you think God is an Idol God, that hath eyes and not see thee? Is he not able to be avenged on thee for thy reproach and contempt thou dishonourest him by? 1 Cor. 10. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger then he?* Its no dallying or jesting matter, thus to stirre up the wrath of God against thee; for if God hath been so terrible against sins of infirmity and passion or sudden temptations, and that in the very godly, as we see in *Moses, David, Ely and Uzzah*, how will his fierce anger break out implacably against thee, a daring and impudent sinner? Oh consider then, how provoking and imbittering your presumptions are of God against you.

## Of Presumptuous Sinnes.

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2. In the old Testament there was no sacrifice appointed for wilfull and presumptuous sins; and that the Apostle alludeth unto, *Heb. 10.* when he saith, *If we sin wilfully, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin:* This I say alludeth to *Num. 15.* where after the sacrifices prescribed for the sinnes of Ignorance, he nameth none for presumptuous sinners, but such must be immediatly cut off; not that such sinnes upon repentance might not be pardoned, for then *David* did in vain pray for the pardon of his murder and adultery, because no particular sacrifice was appointed for such sinnes, only God hereby would demonstrate his hatred and wrath against such stout and stubborn offenders, to the terror and fear of others. As *Dent. 17. 12, 13.* The man that would not obey the Priest, he was to be cut off for his presumption, that everyone might hear and fear, and do no more so presumptuously. This is the reason why no sacrifice was prescribed for such sins, but immediate death. They therefore are too rigid, and lay a necessary ground for irrecoverable desperation, who hold, all wilfull grosse sinnes under the time of the Gospel to be unpardonable, that God will not set open the door of grace for such to enter in, that there is no Ark provided for such; only such sins are not easily pardoned, they make a sad breach between God and the soul; they wast our comforts, they wound our consciences, they throw us into the depth of fear and perplexed thoughts within; why should not this then make cold at the very heart? those sinnes so easily, so frequently, so constantly committed by thee, will hardly be washed away: It will cost thee many a sad hour, many an heavy temptation, frequents struglings and strivings, ere a reconciliation be made between God and thy soul.

3. The presumptuous sinner makes himself a direct image of the devil; only the devils sinnes are intellectual, being the spiritual wickednesses in high places, and thine are bodily gross ones; and wherein art thou become after his image and likeness? even in this respect, he is already under torments, and he knoweth greater one day will be inflicted on him; he is full of knowledge and clear apprehension of this enmity and malice against God and his way, yet for all this torment,

2. The old Testament had no sacrifice for presumptuous sinnes.

3. The presumptuous sinner makes himself a direct Image of the devil.



and all this knowledge and light, he wilfully sinneth against God, and increaseth his condemnation; such a bodily devil is every presumptuous sinner; it may be severall plagues and punishments of God are upon him already, his knowledge, his conscience, his own heart is against him, saying, Remember for all this thou shalt come to judgement, and yet he wilfully and obstinately will runne into all wickednesse; wherein canst thou make thy self liker a devil then in this very respect? Oh its not so much sinne, as thy presumption and wilfulnesse in it, that makes thee in such an incurable disposition.

4.  
It is a great disposer to the unpardonable sinne.

4. *This presumptuous sinning, is a great disposer to the very unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost, as appeareth by the former place quoted, Heb. 10. Adde but apostacy, and a total forsaking of the whole way of Christ, with despite and malice against Gods truth, and then this presumptuous sinner hath sinned the sinne against the holy Ghost; so that presumptuous sinning though it be not accompanied with a totall apostacy, yet its putting thee into the way, if God stop not, if grace help not, thou art beginning to fall down that steep hill: Oh then take heed of wilfull sinnes, and sinnes against your clear light, for these at last may bring on despite and malice to what is good: Thus malice may bring thee to apostacy, and unto an implacable opposition to the holy waies of God, and when thou art fallen so farre, thou art come to the very bottom of all.*

5.  
Its a sign that the party so sinning is under a greater power of sinne and Satan then other men.

5. *Presumptuous sinning hath this heavy aggravation, for its a sign and evident symptome that the party so sinning is under a greater power of sin and Satan then other men. Were it not that the devil had filled thy heart, were it not that sins were rooted in thee, and become thy very nature, as it were, thou couldst never harden thy self to such impiety; so that when you see a man go on in such presumptuous waies, you may cry out, as the mother concerning her daughter, Have mercy on me, for my daughter is greatly tormented with the devil. The wife may pray for such an husband, Have mercy on me, for my husband is possessed with a devil: the father for such a childe; the master for such a servant: We may say to such,*

as Peter to Simon Magus, Oh thou childe of the devil, full of gall and bitterneſſe, thou haſt no part in the Kingdom of God: Thou therefore who with all ſpite and contempt doſt runne into the exceſſive waies of ſinne, nothing keeps thee back; know, that if ſin and the devil had not a great power over thee, thou couldſt never be ſo obſtinate.

6. *Such presumptuous ſinning makes our condition miſerable, becauſe it putteth us into an incurable ſtate.* There is no ordinary way to be waſhed from this filth, as it were, for being thus proud and obſtinate, all the means that are applied can do no good. Ely's ſons, becauſe presumptuous ſinners, deſpiſed all their fathers counſels. The Jews, becauſe presumptuous, made the Prophets complain, they had *laboured in vain*, and ſtretched out their hands all the day long to no purpoſe: yea they made Chriſt to weep over Jeruſalem, Mat. 23. 37. *How often would I have gathered thee, but thou wouldſt not.*

6.  
It puts a man  
into an incur-  
able ſtate.

Laſtly, *Therefore doth presumptuous ſinning make a man ſo miſerable, becauſe wrath and condemnation will take them in the miſt of all their ſecurity*; when they are leaſt thinking of it, when they are in their proſperity, taking their eaſe, as it was with Sodom and Gemorrhah, as it was with the old world: Oh what a ſudden change will God make in a moment upon ſuch haughty ſinners! Presumptuous *Belſhazzar* in the miſt of his jollity, ſeeth an hand-writing, and falleth into feares and trembling; their ſunne ſetteth at noon day, and even while the fleſh is in their mouthes, they are conſumed.

*Uſe of Inſtruction*, To take up a bitter lamentation for the woſull and wretched eſtate moſt men are in: and the more it is to be pitied, becauſe ſuch do not pity themſelves, for where do ye not ſee places full of presumptuous ſinners? what are all thoſe prophane, groſſe tranſgreſſions committed againſt the light of the Goſpel, wittingly and willingly, but notorious presumptions? Are not our ſtreets, and many families full of ſuch presumptuous ſinners? Oh the patience and longſuffering of God, that giveth ſuch any longer time upon the earth! Oh the goodneſſe of God, that ſtrikes thee not ſuddenly, that damneth thee not ſuddenly! Do not think long to dare God after this manner, his vengeance, though  
flow,

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slow, will at last break thee into pieces. It behoveth God for his own name and honour to take notice of, and punish such bold offenders; Thou hast a time, a while wherein thou satisfiest thy lusts, and dost accomplish thy desire, fearing nothing: But oh, what wilt thou do, when God ariseth terribly to shake thy heart and conscience! What mountains and hills shall then cover thee? Oh therefore get that mountain of thy heart melt like wax, humble thy self betimes under the hand of the great and mighty God, agree with this enemy and terrible adversary of thine, while thou art in the way.



## S E R M. XXV II.

*Of Sinne Reigning in a man, with the Signes and discovering Marks thereof.*

P S A L. 19. 13.

*Keep back thy Servant from presumptuous sins, that they prevail not over me.*

**T**He third part considerable in this Petition comes to be treated on, *viz.* The Modification or Qualification of his Petition, or in what manner he would be thus preserved, and that is, *That sinne may not prevail over him*; That no sin may lord or master him, so that he should be a servant, and in continual bondage to it, for seeing he cannot serve two such contrary masters, as God and sinne; if he love sinne and subject himself to that, he doth thereby forsake and renounce God.

The



The *Psalmist* therefore takes it for granted, that while he is in this life, he cannot be without motions and instigations to sinne, yet he desireth, that these may not prevail to have dominion over him. Its with *David* as the Sea and the Land; The waters are higher then the earth, in all natural considerations, the waters would immediately prevail over it to drown it, but God hath set bounds to it; and so it is here, There are daily workings of corruption, and strong inclinations to sinne, even in the godly, and had they only their own strength, they would immediately be plunged into all filth, but grace supports and prevents. From this we observe,

*That though the godly cannot be without sinne, yet they are earnestly to watch and pray, that sinne do not prevail over them.* Observ.

While we are in conflict and combate with sin, it will not be our ruine, but when we wilfully take these bonds and chains upon us, then sinne will be our overthrow. The Maid that cried out, while any man violently assaulted her, was acquitted by Gods command; Hence *Rom. 6.12.* the Apostle exhorts, *That we let not sinne reign in our mortal bodies*; he doth not say, Let it not be there, but let it not reign: Even as the *Israelites* could not wholly expell the *Jebusites* and *Canaanites*, yet they kept them under, they hindered them from reigning over them; so ought the children of God. There will be pride, earthlinesse, unbelief, moving and working in thee, only let them not reign over thee. The Apostle in that sixth Chapter, doth at large shew how every man till regenerated, is a servant to sinne, and overcome by it, till the grace of Regeneration doth renew us, and set at liberty; but of this anon.

Before we come to shew what are the signs and discoveries of sin reigning in a man, take notice of some particulars introductory.

As first, *That there is original sinne, which by nature doth reign over all mankind*: so that there was never any man (except Christ God and man) which was not wholly under the power of it; This sinne hath depraved all the whole man, deprived them of all their strength, so that whatsoever

Introductory Propositions to the point of reigning sin.

I.

it bids us think, love, desire or act, that we immediately perform, so that as the godly are said *no longer to live, but Christ in them*; so much rather, every man by nature may be said not to live, *but sinne in him*. This the Apostle *Rom. 5.* doth at large insist on, declaring that sinne as the cause, and death as the effect, *hath reigned over all*. This is the spiritual bondage all are in, under which we are all to groan more then the *Israelites* under *Pharaohs* oppression; and the lesse it is a burden to thee, the more it ought to be, so that an *Anathema* may well be pronounced against all those Doctrines that do wholly deny this bondage, or in a great part diminish it. This is like those mad and distracted persons, who though in prison and chains, suffering in a wretched condition, yet fancy to themselves Kingdoms and Nations that they are Lords over: Yea this bondage is in some measure still in the godly, though regenerated, and they bitterly complain of this, as that which makes all their comforts to be like worm-wood. *Rom. 7.* Paul grieveth under this, as being *sold under sinne*, as a slave brought under the power of another against his will. Thus it is with the godly, *Cogitur motus sentire*, though not alwayes *consentire*, as Bernard said; and ~~even~~ even the children of God do finde the flesh so farre prevailing against the Spirit sometimes, that *the things they would not do, those they do*.

*Rom. 7. 15*

2. Secondly, Every unregenerate man till sanctified, is not only under the dominion of original sinne, but under some actual sinne, or some one or divers lusts do reign over every unconverted man. So *Rom. 6.* all, before ingrafted into Christ, are said to obey sinne in the lusts thereof, and *2 Pet. 2.* The Apostle saith, *Of whom a man is overcome, he is a servant unto*. Now there is no natural man, but sometimes one sinne, sometimes another, yea sometimes many do overcome him, *Quot vitia tot Domini*, the Heathen could say, So many vices, so many cruel Lords and Masters. All unregenerate men have put their neck into sins yoke, and are unwilling to have it taken off again; Though he be the greatest Ruler and Governour of the world, yet if a man be a servant to some lust, he is more wretched and miserable then the *Algier Gallie-slave*; What

What is it for thee to be a Master of so many servants, and thou a servant to such a vile sinne? One is a slave to uncleanness, another to ambition, another to covetousnesse; so that the whole world is like an *Egypt*, an iron furnace, a place for drudgery to sinne: Oh the pains that men take to go to hell! Oh the labour and care they are at to damn themselves! Such servants and bond-men are all unregenerate men to sinne, *Tit. 3. We were as others, unbelieving, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures.* So that we may truly say of mankind, that which *Tiberius* of the Roman Nation, *O Gentem ad servitutem natam.* *Issachar* is compared to an Ass for couching down under her burdens, and we are more brutish, who wilfully subject our selves to sin and Satan for our utter destruction.

Thirdly, *We are to know, that sinne may have a twofold prevalency or dominion over a man, either with a full and plenary consent, or else unwillingly with reluctancy or contradiction.* As *Iosephus* saith of *Herod*, that he reigned over the Jews for many years by meer force, they opposing and resisting of him, but afterwards they willingly contented to him. As there is such a ruling in the world by force and by spontaneous subjection; so sinne hath such a dominion in wicked men, it reigneth, as those who readily, willingly, and with great delight obey the lusts thereof; they choose and imbrace nothing so much as this; now on the godly sinne may sometimes prevail, as we see in *David* himself and others, but then there is not a total and full possession given to sin. Though sinne be the strong one, yet the house is not at quiet, or if it be, as in *David*, yet afterwards a stronger then sin cometh, which is the seed of Gods grace, and that overcometh; So that by this distinction Divines use to resolve that case of Conscience, *Whether a godly man may be said to be under a reigning sinne?* For as you understand or explain the word *reigning*, so it is true or false; if by reigning be understood a quiet, total and full possession, so that the whole heart is given up to sinne, so a godly man cannot be, because of that seed of God abiding in him; but if by reigning be meant such a dominion that brings a man into obedience, though



with some conflict and grief, and at last with a final recovery; then in this sense sinne may sometimes reign in a godly man.

4. Fourthly, *Sinne comes to prevail over a man by degrees and subtil insinuation.* A man is not at the very first under the powerful dominion of it, *1. J. am. 1.* There are first enticings and suggestings, after that sinne conceiveth, and after that brings forth: So that as the Cloud in *Elijahs* time, which was at first but as big as an hand, did afterwards biggen into a vast Cloud, able to darken the whole sky; or as the exhalations and vapours when they arise at first from the earth, are not discernable, but when congealed in the second Region, they turn to black tempests of lightning and thunder; Thus it is here, sinne hath its beginnings, and its subtil ingresses, but afterwards these sparks do prove a very great flame. As therefore it was *Herods* design to kill Christ in the Cradle, in his Infancy, fearing his Kingdom should ruine him, so it should be thy godly wisdom on the contrary to subdue sinne in the beginnings of it, to break them in the egg, before they come to be Dragons or flying Serpents; one spark let alone may endanger an whole Town; if thou give indulgence to thy lusts at first, they will be thy masters afterwards; thy pride, thy unbelief, thy worldi nesse, thy passions, if thou resist them not betimes, they will soon be thy Lords and Masters.

Signs of sinne reigning over a man.

These things premised, let us consider what are the signs or discovering Marks of sinne prevailing over a man, when may it be said that such an one is a servant to his sinne, it hath dominion over him? And

- I. When the study, endeavour and purpose of a man is wholly bent for the accomplishing of some lust. A godly man may fall into sinne, may commit iniquity, but yet his heart, his study, his whole soul is not set upon it. This our Saviour confirmeth, *John 8.* He that doth sinne, is the servant of sinne; and because this point is of so great consequence, mark the asseveration he useth, *vers. 30.* Verily verily I say unto you, in some importtant, necessary and consequential truths Christ useth this affirmation; now the Pharisees boasting they were the seed of *Abraham*, and hereby glorying

glorying in their liberty, there was no doctrine so necessary, as to let them know they were servants and bond-men, and that unto their lusts: Consider then this Proposition, thou that art rich, great in the world, dost what thou pleasest, remember that thou art an enslaved wretch, whosoever doth commit iniquity; now what is this committing of sin as makes a man a servant? it is such as John speaks of, 1 Jch. 3. *He that is born of God sinneth not, viz.* such a studious, diligent, industrious providing for the lusts of the flesh, that the whole man is taken up therewith: Some learned men would make a difference between ἀμαρτάνειν and ποιεῖν ἀμαρτίαν, to sinne simply, and to make sinne industriously, but in the Scripture use those expressions carry not such a distinction, only the context must make such a difference. Those that so sinne, that their endeavours, desires and inclinations are for it, such are the servants of sinne, though the act should not be committed; As Christ said to Judas, *What thou doest, do quickly*, not what thou art about to do, or art purposed to do, but *what thou doest*, though he was then at Supper, yet Christ said, he was then betraying of him, then delivering him up, because his heart was to do it. So that this will greatly discover, though not to others, yet to our own consciences, when sin reigneth over us; if the thoughts, inclinations, and all the care of the soul be that way, for as the godly know they are servants to righteousness, and that the Lord is their God, because of the meditations and affections they bear to him, so may a wicked man easily finde out his bondage to sinne by the motions, propensions and constant inclinations of the soul. Thus the Adulterer, his thoughts, imaginations and desires are that way. The covetous man, his projects, desires and endeavours are wholly worldly, so that if men did not wilfully blinde their eyes, they might easily see what miserable captives they were to some sin or other.

Secondly, *Then sinne prevaieth over a man as an absolute Lord, when a man doth willingly and readily give up himself to the lusts and commands of sinne.* What sinne bids him think, he thinketh, what it bids him love, he loveth, do, he doth; As the Centurion proved his Command and Authority, because

2.

When a man doth willingly and readily give up himself to the commands of sin.

cause when he said to his servants, *Do this, they did it.* Therefore the Apostle useth an emphatical word, *Rom. 6. As you have given up your members unto unrighteousnesse, so give them up to righteousness,* *παρατίθεν*, is a free, ready setting a mans self for service, as servants do when their masters call. As the Angels are said to see the face of God, to stand in his presence ready for every beck and command, so we who were once so ready to obey the lusts of sinne, should now be a willing, forward people for God: Oh its a great matter to consider, with what consent and delight thou dost freely and gladly commit sinne, the more of this, the more doth sinne prevail over thee. *Paul* found that sinne led him captive, but because he strove against it, he conflicted with it, he did that he would not have done, therefore these sins were sins of infirmity, for he delighted in the Law of God, his joy was in the clean contrary to sinne at that time, *Rom. 7.* But now, when sinne findes all in thee, as the Devil did, *ready swept and garnished*, when its like the honey and the honey-comb unto thee, then tremble and be afraid, saying, I am in bondage and slavery. As in the day of Gods power, *his people are a willing people*, *Psal. 110.* So in the time of sin and Satans power, sinners are willing to obey them.

3.  
When we make  
it our utmost  
end.

Thirdly, *Then any sinne is a master, and doth prevail, when we make it our utmost end, placing it in Gods room.* For a man that serveth sinne doth not make it meerly his Master, but it is even a god to him, he referreth all things to that lust, he eats, he drinks, he labours, liveth only to such a sinne. The Scripture calls it, *Living to sinne*, that is, when all our labors, endeavours and happinesse, as we judge, is in the satisfying of such a corrupt affection. As the prophane Amorist in the Comedie said, *Malo me ista mulier, quam Deus ipse amet* He had rather that woman should love him then God himself, though every enslaved sinner doth not utter this blasphemy with his mouth, yet he saith thus in his heart, he is thus inwardly affected: Doth not the adulterer regard the love of such a woman more then the favour of God? If he doth not, why then dareth he displease God and damn his own soul, to enjoy those forbidden pleasures of sinne? Do they not desire the enjoyment



ment of such a mortal creature, rather then of an everliving God? So the covetous, earthly man, is not his money a god to him, in which he trusts, and from which he fetcheth all his comforts? therefore it is called Idolatry, *Col. 3. 5.* *Clasum arca custodit Jovem*, as the Poet said. So then, whensoever any man doth so degenerate and become so brutish, as to live and labour only to accomplish such a sinne, this man is mastered by his sinne, his sinne is a god to him, as the Apostle speaketh of some, *That their belly was their god*, *Phil. 3. 19.* Yet what more ordinary then to see such miserable, enslaved persons every where? You pity malefactors when you see them go up and down with their chains and manacles, and their Keepers attending them. but you cannot see any prophane drunkard, adulterer, covetous person, but you may cry out, There goeth a poor prisoner, there goeth a wretched captive. It was written upon the Tomb of a great *Assyrian* Monarch punished by God for his impieties, *ἐὺς εἰσπαῖν εὐσεβὺς* *isw*, Looking upon me learn to be godly; so do thou, beholding many men, who all the day, all the year long live to the satisfaction of such or such a lust; take heed of the chains and iron fetters sin may put thee in.

We deferre other characters till the next: Learn from hence to take heed any sinne do not prevail over thee. The Apostle *Rom. 6.* speaketh of two contrary kingdoms, the one of sinne and Satan, the other of Christ and righteousness. Now consider under which thou art, there can be no greater misery to a godly heart, as you see by *Paul*, then to be captivated to sinne, to do the sinne thy heart and soul is against: Oh then think, if the people of *Israel* when they were under *Pharaohs* temporal oppression, did so grieve and groan under it, that they were even weary of their lives; if when they were a second time carried into captivity, *Jeremiah* in the name of all the people makes such bitter *Lamentations*, what then shouldst thou do when sin and Satan rule thee at their will? Do not say, This is the bondage I would have, and as for Christs cords and bonds, let us break them asunder, for thou wilt finde this will prove bitterneffe at last; be weary then of thy fetters, of thy prisons: Oh pray and desire others

to pray that God would set thee at liberty to runne the way of his Commandements.



## S E R M. XXVIII.

### *More Discoveries of Reigning Sinne in a man with its Aggravations.*

P S A L. 19. 13.

*Keep back thy Servant from presumptuous sinnes, that they  
have no dominion over me.*

**W**E are to proceed in discovering some further Signs and Characters of Sinne in its dominion and reign over a man; and the first in order at this time shall be this,

4. *That sinne is a reigning sinne, which makes all other sinnes obey that:* That is the Ocean, into which all the streames do empty themselves; that is the Prince of devils, which sets all other devils on work. As it was a sure sign, that pride and envy had dominion over the Pharisees, because whatsoever cruell or crafty counsels they undertook, it was wholly to satisfie those inward lusts: This is commonly called a mans beloved sinne; and some think David did especially aim at that, when he resolved to be upright, and to keep himself from his iniquity, Psal. 18. 23. that peculiar sinne he was inclined unto, for commonly one sinne out groweth all the rest, and as the tall tree takes away all the nourishment from the undershrubs, so some overpowerfull lust draweth from other sinnes; yea all other sinnes are devoured by that, as the  
Whale

A reigning sin makes all other sinns obey it.

Whale consumeth the little fish. Examine then thy self, What is that sinne, to which all thy other sinnes do relate? The Adulterer, if he be covetous, or unjust, or overreaching to get any gain, it is not for the monies sake, *but to spend it all upon his lusts*: That sinne is in its verticall point and full dominion, which is loved and delighted in for its own sake, and all other sinnes so farre as they help to accomplish it. Thus if Covetousnesse be thy beloved reigning sinne, all thy other sinnes of passionate swearing, or lying, and cruell extorting wayes are to fulfill it.

2. *Then sinne hath full dominion, when it is turned into a second nature, when through custom we are habituated to it*: for that which is naturall, though we labour to suppress it never so much, yet it will break out again: Every thing followeth its natural inclination, and it can do no otherwise; therefore saith the Prophet, *If a blackamore can change his skin, then may ye do good who are accustomed to do evil*. Thus originall sinne, you heard, that captivateth and enthralleth the godly man, because its so naturall, its like Ivy cleaving to the Oak, that doth consume it at last; and so any actuall sinnes, the more they are naturalized the more we are accustomed to them, its as hard to remove them as high mountains: Oh then consider, how little it will excuse, when thou pleadest for thy sinnes, that thy naturall constitution carrieth thee, thou canst not help it, it is thy nature; *Thus Cholerick and furious men will extenuate their Tyger-like passions*: Oh but tremble and consider, the more thy constitution, or thy custom inclineth thee to such sinnes, the more dominion those sinnes have over thee, the greater is thy thraldome and vassallage to it. And doth not experience teach this? men accustomed to drunkennesse, to uncleannesse, are so habituated in it, that they cannot live a day without such sinnes; they are not able to refrain from the temptations, they cannot but add drunkennesse to thirst; like the hydropicall man, one draught doth not extinguish but provoke more thirst; Thus the enjoying of this unlawfull pleasures doth not satisfie, but make them desire to return to their lusts again; Oh how many such wretched prisoners walk up and down every where!

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When it is turned into a second nature.



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When plagues  
and judge-  
ments do not  
reclaim him.

3. *Its a sign that sinne hath great power and dominion over a man, that notwithstanding all the judgements and plagues of God upon him for it, yet for all that, he will do it; and although it may be for the time suppressed, yet as soon as the judgement is over, they return with all greedinesse to their vomit again.* You see this remarkably in *Pharaoh*, that ambitious design to keep the *Israelites* under, did as much overrule him as he did the *Israelites*, and therefore notwithstanding such remarkable plagues immediately falling upon him, yet no sooner is there any respite, but he hardens himself to do wickedly as before. Thus also we may see in the *Israelites*, that whole Nation was brought under the power of that abominable sinne, *Idolatri*; and because they served other Gods, therefore God gave them up to serve hard Lords and masters: yet for all those frequent judgements, how prone were they upon all occasions to commit *Idolatri*? and are there not many such enslaved sinners, that for their adulteries and drunkennesse are brought to a morsell of bread, to great extremities and beggery? yet they do not take notice of Gods visible displeasure against them; but in those miseries, can commit those grievous sinnes, the cause of all their ruin.

7.

It is that sinne  
which a man  
cannot endure  
should be re-  
proved or  
preached a-  
gainst.

4. *That sinne which a man cannot endure should be reprov'd or preached against*, concerning which a man doth not love to hear the threatnings, or the directions in Gods Word, That sinne hath great dominion over a man: When *Saul* would spare *Agag* and the fattest cattell, it's a sign he was immoderately affected to them, There is many a man will commend such Sermons that are full of power and zeal against those sinnes he is not guilty of, but if you come to meddle with his sinne, reprove that his conscience condemneth him for, then he breaketh out into rage: on the other side, it's a sure rule that man is upright, and heartily desireth no kinde of sinne may over-master him, that loveth to have his heart and life searched, That desireth all sinne as well as some one sinne may be displaid in all the aggravations of it; That looketh upon all sinne as poyson, and so darest not eat of one kinde more then another; Thus *David* excellently, *Psa.* 319.133. *Order my steps by thy Word, and let no iniquity have dominion*

dominion over me : Here he prayeth the same matter as is in my Text, and also sheweth how we may be preserved from sinnes dominion, even by a diligent and carefull attending unto Gods Word. Oh then the sinne thou hidest and coverest, the sinne no man must tell thee of, that do thou fear and tremble at, This hath dominion over thee.

5. That sin which a man doth much resolve against, yea, fast and pray, and mourn against, and yet he is overtaken by it, This sinne hath great dominion over a man : as that disease is very strong which still abideth, though a man use all the advise and means to repress it ; Indeed thy resisting of sinne and earnest conflicting with it, is good and comfortable, and the godly in respect of the motions of sinne, and severall actions of sinne, not so grosse in nature, are often over powered ; and those wicked men who are carried away with strong and grievous lusts, yet if they strive, pray, mourn, and call upon others, especially on Christ, and carefully avoid all temptations, they may hope God will at last raise them out of that grave of sinne they are buried in, but yet they must know, had not sinne not only a foot as we say, but the whole body in their hearts, they could never lick up such vomit, such sinne, that with so much grief and shame, and terrour they have confessed to God : Oh then thou that art afraid any disease or sicknesse should prevail over thee, should overcome thy naturall strength, fear lest sinne do thus overwhelm thee.

6. Those sinnes that consist in an inordinate affection to lawfull and necessary comforts, do many times easilier intangle and overcome, then those that are outward pleasures and delights of known sinnes: inordinate love to our houses, estates, especially life, doth more speedily conquer a man, then love to a grosse sinne, so that those sinnes may have the greatest dominion over thee, which thou dost not at all suspect. Thus an over-love, an over-desire of wordly comforts, may possesse thee like an Hectick Feaver, which is hardly discerned, yet secretly wastes and consumeth. Hence we reade in Rev. 3. They are so often said to be blessed who overcome temptations, because its seldome seen but that temptations over-

8.

That sinne which a man much prays and resolves against, and yet is overtaken by it.

9.

Inordinate love to lawfull comforts may be a mans master-sin.

come us, life and livelieoods is very necessary and dear to us; all that a man hath, even his very soul, he will give for that; Therefore in the Scripture outward afflictions and troubles are often called temptations, because they try a man in that which is dearest to him; If any love to these outward comforts be immoderate, then it will be discovered, whether we have an *Isaac* that we can offer or not; O then think not that thou hast cast off all the yokes and bonds of sinne, because such grosse lusts and prophane courses can no more entangle thee; for if thy wealth, thy trade, thy wife, thy children, thy life it self be too dear to thee in Gods cause, then sinne hath dominion over thee: If you cannot say, Lusts and prophaneesse do overcome such a man, yet if you can say, Such a man loveth father, or wife, or children, or life it self more then Christ, then sinne hath dominion by the immoderate affection of these things over a man; Oh then consider, whether these careful things do not like a *Dalilah* lie in thy bosome, inticing of thee, never letting thee alone, till it hath bereaved thee of all thy strength.

10.  
When sinne  
hinders and  
disturbs all  
our duties and  
religious per-  
formances.

Lastly, *Then sin hath dominion over us, When it hinders and distracteth all our duties and religious performances to God;* for our Saviour sets this down for an undeniable rule, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*, Mat. 6. 24. If God will have the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole strength, then there is nothing for sinne or the world; There cannot be two contrary Lords or Masters of thy heart; *He that loveth the world the love of the Father is not in him*; A man cannot at the same time look with one eye upwards and the other downwards. As the Scripture speaks in matter of Idolatry, There is no halting between two, no dividing of worship between God and Idols, but *if God be God serve him*: so it is here, If the world be thy Master, If such a sinne be thy Master, then serve it; Never think to be under Gods dominion, and the worlds, Never think to serve God and thy sinnes also; yet this is the foolish contradiction wicked men run into; They will on the Sabbath day come as if they served God, and go to the Ale-house on the week day to serve the devil by excesse in drink-  
ing,



ing and other riot: Oh then consider this more seriously all ye who finde your lusts, or the world do either distract or choak your duties, or else make you wholly lay them aside, so that you care not how seldom you are in them, yea, they are a burthen to you: Thus you have characters of sinnes dominion; Let us now propound the aggravation of this bitter slavery, which will be as so many spurres to make us long for a year of *Jubilee*, to come out of this prison, as *Joseph* did.

The aggravations of slavery under sin.

And first, *Dominion over us by sinne is worse then all outward bondage and slavery whatsoever*: How tedious was *Pharaohs* oppressions to the *Israelites*, it made them weary of their lives, God at last heard their groans and cries; Let it be thus with thee, O Lord, as long as this sinne or that lust prevaileth over me, I have no pleasure in my life, I am weary of my self because of this soul-captivity: Neither riches, health, or honours do me any good while this lust oppresseth me; Oh let God every day hear the groaning of thy oppressed soul, and certainly God that doth so graciously incline to shew mercy to the oppressed and needy, that the Scripture doth so often celebrate his goodness herein, will not alwaies despise thy inthrallled and over-whelmed soul: If then bodily slavery be so great a misery to an ingenious man, and liberty such an inestimable good thing, that the Rabbins say, If the Heavens were Parchment, and the Sea Ink, it would not serve to write down the praises of it, how terrible and intolerable should the yoke of any sinne be? Have not most of the Warres that ever were in the world been for liberty against slavery and oppression, Every one thinketh him too covetous of life that had rather live a vassall then not to live at all; This was *propter vitam, vivendi perdere causas*, Shall then the outward bondage of the body trouble thee? Shall slaves to the Turk have such prayers and contributions made for them to be released, and dost thou not respect the freedom of thy immortall soul? When once sinne begins to be a burden to thee, When once its a wearisome bondage, then thou art in a way of salvation.

I.  
Its worse then all outward bondage.

2. To be under sinnes dominion is so great a misery that the  
Hb 3 godly

2.

The godly have  
promises a-  
gainst it as the  
greatest evil.

godly have a speciall Promise to be preserved from it as the greatest evil, Rom. 6. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, because under grace*: Thus the Godly in their sad conflicts and daily fears, lest such or such sinnes do wholly overwhelm them, have this comfortable promise to support them; Wonder not to see wicked men lorded over by their lusts, that they are carried away as brute beasts; Alas, they are not under this promise, under this grace. The godly mans faith is said to overcome the world, and Christ who is with the godly, is stronger then the devil who is against them.

3.  
All Christ did  
for us is called  
a Redemption.

3. *This bondage to sinne is so great a calamity, that the whole work of Christ, which he did for us, and all his sufferings is called a redemption.* In that Christ is a spirituall Redeemer, it argueth sinne is a spirituall bondage; Now how dear did this cost him? was it possible for us to be ransomed but by the blood of Christ? Did he not give up himself to the power and dominion of his cruell enemies, that we might be delivered from our spirituall adversaries? As long therefore as sinne hath dominion over thee, thou hast no part in Christs Redemption, for he died to set thee at liberty, he was crucified to free thee from thy sinnes. And if there be no such effect as this upon thee, that glorious redemption hath not at all reached thee; Do not thou then flatter thy self with the name and title of a Redeemer, Oh you say, you hope to see your Redeemer, wherein hath he been a Redeemer to thee? hath he freed thee from such lusts that once had power over thee?

4.  
The reward of  
Sinne.

4. *Consider the sad reward sinne will give thee for all thy service and obedience to it*: To take all those pains, to be in that daily drudgery to a lust which afterwards will be thy eternall torment; how absurd is it? how canst thou but fly from such a master that hath everlasting whips and scourges for thee? yet foolish and unwise sinners never consider where the end of all their labour and service to sinne will be: *Jacob* complained of *Labaus* deceit about his wages, but to all eternity thou wilt have greater cause to cry out that sin hath deceived thee, promising joy and pleasures, but instead of this honny, thou hast gall and wormwood to feed upon to all eternity.

5. In becoming a servant to sinne thou renouncest all that liberty, blessednesse, and happinesse which is in the service of God. When the Pharisees boasted of their freedom by Abraham, Christ told them they were servants of sinne, and then they would be free indeed, *If the Son did make them free*, Joh. 8. What unspeakable joy did David finde in the service of God? Who ever waited on him and was not plentifully rewarded? All our service though so imperfect and deserving hell, yet he doth graciously reward with eternall glory, why then dost thou choose to serve sinne rather then God?

6. He that is a servant to sinne is a servant to the devil also: Where sinne hath dominion the devil hath dominion; Now doth it not terrifie thee to have such a master? the devils possessing of the body and tormenting it is nothing so terrible as the possessing of thy whole man with any evil way. Hence the devil is called *the God of this world*, and is said *to rule in the hearts of the disobedient*; so that they are not only servants but children also of the devil; It's not only thy pride, thy passion, thy lusts, but the devil also that rule over thee: Should not this make men immediately renounce all their lusts, as being the devils livery, and by which we may know he is their Master?

Use of Admonition, To come out of this bondage with speed; We would think many words were needlesse, thy own slavery should make thee desire a redemption; But this undoeth men that they are so used to sin that they know no better, they love no better, therefore the first thing to be prayed for is to feel the chains and fetters upon thee; Though thy sinnes be pleasant and sweet to thee, yet they are chains for all that, and thou shouldst think so: they say among the *Indians* where gold is so plentiful, they fetter their prisoners with chains of gold as we do of iron, because of the commonnesse of it; but are these the lesse prisoners? are they the lesse miserable because their chains be of gold? no more are thy sins lesse heavy though accompanied with pleasures.

5. A renouncing all that liberty, blessednesse, and happinesse which is in the service of God





## SERM. XXIX.

*Sincerity and Reigning sinne are inconsistent.*

PSAL. 19. 13.

*Then shall I be upright, and innocent from the great transgression.*

**W**E have dispatched the two petitions mentioned by David, viz. for remission of sinne, and a powerfull sanctification and preservation from the power of sinne. The last thing to be discussed is, The consequent fruit and benefit which will redound to David, when these mercies are vouchsafed to him, *Then shall I be upright*, Then, viz. When I have obtained the pardon of the guilt of sinne, and grace against the power of sinne, then and never till then am I compleat or upright: Some render the word *Integer*, perfect and whole, or compleat: Some *immaculatus* undefiled: The Septuagint *ἀμωμ*, intimating that any reigning sinne would be like some great spot or deformity upon a man, so as to make all the other parts unlovely: But all these words do aim at the same sense, so that we may observe this Doctrine,

*Doct.*

Sincerity inconsistent with the dominion of any sinne.

*Uprightnesse and truth of grace cannot stand with the totall and peaceable dominion of sinne.* Thus David doth acknowledge evidently, *Let not sinne have dominion over me, then I shall be upright*; and on the contrary, if it do prevail over me, I cannot make any claim to integrity: Truth of grace and the dominion of sinne can no more agree then light and darknesse,

ness, Christ and Belial. Hence is that known place, 1 John 3.9. He that is born of God sinneth not, neither can he, because the seed abideth in him: He cannot sinne, as the Cains, and wicked ones of the world, who are of the devil their father, with a full and a totall resignation of all unto sinne: Hence also is that promise you heard to the godly, Rom. 6. Sin shall not have dominion over you. To enlarge this point, consider these ensuing particulars.

1. That the dominion of sinne, may, and often doth consist with excellent parts and abilities or gifts in a religious way. A man may preach excellently, pray admirably, have great understanding and knowledge in the Scriptures, yet for all that be a very slave to some beastly lust or other. Mat. 7. They that cried Lord, Lord, who had wrought miracles, cast out devils in Christ Name, yet were workers of iniquity. I know its an heavy scandall, and a dreadfull condemnation to be such a swine, and yet have such a jewel in their mouths, but yet experience doth greatly confirm this: A constant and diligent performance of holy and religious duties may consist with a wicked and ungodly life: As Isa. 1. Those that were so exact in their new Moons, and Sacrifices, were commanded to wash them and to make them clean. Oh then conclude on this, multitude of duties and diligence in them, great parts, gifts and enlargements, do not argue uprightnesse, there may be rottennesse in the coar for all this: If unmortified sinnes and passions do reign over thee, thou art still in the state of gall and wormwood, thou art yet in thy sinnes.

The dominion of sinne may consist with excellent gifts.

2. You must remember that old distinction of sinnes dominion, Dominion of either totall and absolute, with peaceable possession, or partiall sin is either totall or partiall. and forced, meeting with much opposition and resistance. Paul complaineth of the captivity he found to sinne, yea he affirmeth there is such lusting and striving in the godly, between the flesh and spirit, that they do the things they would not do, Gal. 6. Here then sinne hath the mastery, but it is by violence, its as a tyrant, not as the lawfull possessor; at the same time the godly groan under that oppression, they delight in the contrary, they pray for spiritual liberty and freedom: Con-

Rom. 7. 2

*varia sunt simul in pugna*, contraries may be in the same subject together fighting one with another, but not in rest and quietnesse, fire and water are together in the same subject fighting, till one hath conquered the other.

Whether sin  
in a godly man  
may wholly  
conquer grace.

3. *It must be confessed that its a very great controversie largely discussed between Papists and Arminians on one hand, and the Orthodox on the other hand, Whether the godly may be totally and finally overcome by sin:* Whether sin may have such dominion over the godly, as that it shall wholly conquer grace, and chase the Spirit of God quite away. The Arminians, they say *David*, in those sinnes of murder and adultery, was wholly conquered by sinne, so that for the present there was no degree of grace left in them. Hereupon they deride the Orthodox, as holding there may be godly murderers, godly adulterers, &c. But the truth in this point is this, *Such as have a seeming profession of Religion; and do fall into a constant, habituated way of grosse and prophane courses, we say, they never truly had the seed of grace in them:* They were dogs and swine though outwardly washed, and therefore return to their mire and vomit again: *They went from us, because they were not of us*, 1 John 2.19. But for such who were once truly ingrafted in Christ, and rooted in him, we say, *Though for a season they may fall into foul and grievous sins, yet they are not wholly conquered, there is a seed within them will recover again,* like those birds that lye in hollow trees, that seem in the winter to be dead, till the warm Sunne comes, and then their life appeareth; their sicknesse is not a sicknesse to death, they are in a swoon, but will recover again. *Peter* was prayed for that his faith may not fail. Grace indeed of it self is amissible, as appeareth in the apostate Angels, and *Adam*, but they are under a new Covenant and Promise made in Christ; so that as because God is their God, their bodies shall be raised out of the grave; so because he is their God, their souls shall conquer these spirituall enemies.

Why sincerity  
is inconsistent  
with the reign  
of sinne.

I.

These things premised, let us consider why sincerity is so inconsistent with the dominion of any sin: And

1. *From the nature of sanctification, which is an universall healing of all the sinfull and diseased parts of the soul; so that there*



there is no way or door for any beloved sin to come in at. I pray God ye be sanctified (saith Paul) throughout, in spirit, soul and body, 1 Theff. 5. 23. So that no spirit sin, no soul sin, no body sinne may have any admission. Thus, as in originall sin there is the seed-plot of all evil, so in regeneration, there is the root of all actual graces: and by this means all sin as well as one sinne is opposed. But now if we look to some, who have illumination only in their mindes, and no renovation of their hearts, because the defence is not universall, its no wonder that they receive many a mortall blow: This is often in the world, that men have great convictions, and yet strong corruptions; they know the will of God, but they do it not; they have a good eye, but a soar leg; they commit the wickednesse they are convinced of; though they have parts, and excellent abilities, yet they throw these flowers often in the dirt; they defile all by vicious lives, and why? their renovation is not universall: Its not upon their heart and affections; if grace were settled there, they would abandon every sinner. Its no advantage with the toad to have a pearl in the head, and poison all over the body.

2. Sincerity and the dominion of any grosse sin will not agree, from the immediate contrariety that is between grace and sin. They are formally opposite one to another, and so cannot lodge in the same brest: Contraries indeed may be together in gradu remisso, as in lukewarm water, but not in gradu intenso, and while they are in that remisse degree, they are fighting and conflicting, and thus it is here, godlinesse and sinne can no more accord then hot and cold, then bitter and sweet, Rom. 12. Hate evil, cleave to that which is good; What communion hath Christ with Belial? Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity. Can the Wolf and Lamb, the Sheep and Tyger lye down together? There is an antipathy in a godly man to sinne, he feareth and trembleth about the temptations of it; How can I do this and sin against God? Gen. 39. 9. said Joseph, its contrary and opposite to my nature. So then seeing there is such an irreconcilable contrariety, wonder not, if where the truth of grace is, there the dominion of sin be subdued: If you say, Why then is any

sinne at all abiding in the godly, because of the contrariety of it: The answer is, sin is expelled by the grace of God assisting and inabling; now because that is by degrees only, even as the disease is not suddenly, but in time expelled by nature; so it is in the work of grace; This darknesse is dispelled, as the Sun doth arise more and more.

3.

3. *Where sincerity of Grace is, there God and Christ is made the beloved of the soul:* Now where the soul is deeply and pre-eminently in love with them, they cannot, they dare not entertain any thing contrary to this love: *The love of Christ constraineth me*, saith Paul, 2 Cor 14. and God requireth love, *with all the heart, soul and strength*: So that two Beloveds can be no more in the soul, then two Suns in the world. *Minus te amat, qui tecum aliquid (Domine) amat*: Doth not our Saviour expressly declare this? *No man can serve two masters, for if he love one, he must hate, i.e. lesse love the other.* Wonder not then if the sincere Christian dare not entertain a contrary love to Christ, for he is espoused and married to him, God is his portion and inheritance, he is given up wholly to him, God is instead of all things else, and he knoweth God is a jealous God, that cannot abide to see another in that heart which is dedicated to him. Oh then, as Dalilah said to Sampson, *How canst thou say thou lovest me, when thou hidest this thing from me?* so doth the upright heart say, How can I say, I love God, when I entertain such enemies and adversaries to him? How can I say, I have none in heaven or earth but God, when yet I imbrace such a sinne so hated and abhorred of God? The very love and ingenuity in a godly breast, will make him loath such sinnes, so that he will say, O Lord, I desire to have the same *idem velle & nolle*, to love what thou lovest, to hate what thou hatest; what is enemy to thee, shall be hated by me with a perfect hatred.

4.

4. *Uprightnesse cannot stand with the allowed dominion of any sinne, from the nature of sinne:* All sinne and every sin is poison, is highly dishonouring of God, and destructive to a mans soul. There is no good sinne, no harmlesse sinne, as there is no sweet road, or harmlesse dragon. Seeing therefore what sinne soever it be, yet it hath that blacknesse and oppo-

opposition to God, it hath that deformity and loathsomeness with it, that other sinnes have; the sincere man cannot close with it. Hence 1 John 3. he is said, *not to sin*, in the abstract or generall: one sinne is as abhorred by God as another: The Spirit of God is grieved by one as well as another, and so the godly mans heart is opposite to one as well as the other: Not but that the godly may be sooner overtaken with some sinne then another, even as they excell in one grace more then another: Through their constitutions, relations, or other temptations, one sinne is more hardly resisted then another. The wall may be weaker at one place then another, and so the enemy have more easily entrance, but yet still the frame, inclination and desire of the heart is against all. Seeing therefore there is no sinne of which he may say, This is good; the law is not against this, God is not offended at this, therefore he dareth not commit it.

5. *Sincerity will not bear the dominion of any sin, because of the finite and limited nature of the soul, as also the faculties and operations thereof.* The heart of a man cannot vigorously and strongly pursue two objects, especially if different or contrary: *You cannot serve God and Mammon*, Mat. 6. 21, Mat. 12. 35. Our Saviour doth there imply, every man hath a treasure, that which his whole soul is taken up with, and where that is, his heart is: He cannot have two treasures, but one. Now as from the same fountain cannot flow bitter streams and sweet, so neither from the same treasure can come good or bad; Either its a good treasure and we do all from that, or a bad, and all is from that. The soul of a man is too narrow and limited to be intensely affected to different objects; If he cleaveth to God, thereby he is loosened from sinne and the world; if to the world, thereby he is separated from God: You cannot therefore be under a twofold distinct dominion, either God, or the world and devil will have the choice and vigorous affections of thy soul.

6. *Sincerity will not abide the dominion of known sin, because they that have it are under the promise, in a state of grace, whereby God doth often visit and affect their souls, that they may not be overcome by their spirituall enemies: This hath Sampsons.*



strength to break in pieces all those cords of sin that the godly are in danger to be bound with. As long as this heaven will drop fatness, so long their hearts cannot be a wilderness. Alas, take the strongest Christian that is, let him be never so well fortified, yet if he had no more then his own power, he would quickly prove the prodigall, and spend all his stock; for do not *Adam* and the apostate Angels abundantly confirm us, That man liveth not a godly life by his own industry, but the quickning promise that makes the dead heart to live, the barren to be fruitfull, the strong to be tender and flexible. Thus the promise runneth, *I will take away the heart of stone*, Ezek. 36. and *I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall never depart from me*, Jer. 31. Here you see its not any thing within a man, but that which is wholly without, that doth thus preserve and keep grace alive in us; could they be thrown out of this Ark, this Covenant of grace, they would be tossed up and down with the waves of ungodlinesse as well as others. Here lieth the strength and hope of the godly man, even in the free gracious promise of God, that prevents sin, or recovers out of it: Insomuch that we may truly say, In vain is the heart watched and observed, unlesse the Lord also keep and deliver it. As *Aristotle* saith, if it were not for the motion of the heavens, every thing would be stricken dead presently, he thought that gave life and motion to all things. To be sure were it not for this promise of grace, we should fall into the hands of our enemies, sin and the devil, as well as others.

7.

Lastly, *Therefore uprightnesse and a reigning sin cannot stand together, because that will put a man upon the constant and fervent use of all these means, which are to conquer sin.* For you must know, though the godly have this promise to be preserved from sins dominion, yet it is in the carefull and diligent use of the means, which are divers: There are general means and more particular; General means are Preaching of the Word and Prayer, no lust can prevail over thee while thou art carefull in the discharge of these duties, sin cannot overcome the hearing and the praying Christian; these keep the devil and lusts at a distance: So a general mean is watchfulness, and a diligent standing upon our tower, to foresee the enemies

enemies approach: This duty of watching the Scripture doth often command, as without which, by our sleepinesse and negligence, we shall with *Saul* lose our spear and cruse, our strength and comforts. The particular means are faith, that is the shield, which above all, *Ephes. 6.* we are to take, as being most defensive against every mortall wound: For the soldier to throw away his sword, was no such dishonour, as to cast away his shield, because the one was offensive, this later defensive. As faith, so zeal and fervency, that makes a man alwaies in action, that puts upon exercise, whereby many diseases are prevented. The like might be said of humility, and a godly fear, but I forbear. The next thing is, to answer an objection; May not the godly, though not totally or finally, yet for a while be overcome by some lust or other? Do we not see *David* wallowing in his gore blood? Is not *Peter* overcome by his inordinate fear, so as to betray Christ with fearfull swearings and cursings? The number of the godly will be exceeding few, if none be holy that are not sometimes overcome by sin; If then experience telleth this, why doth God suffer this partial dominion of sin? how cometh it about that the godly are foyled at any time?

The reasons of this may be First, *A carnall and sinful trust in a mans righteousness or strength, for which God leaveth him to himself. Ezek. 33. 13.* The righteous man comes to fall from his righteousness by trusting in it. Thus *Peter* was so easily overcome by the carnall confidence he had in himself, *Though all men should forsake thee, yet he would not.* If the child let go his fathers hand, no wonder if he fall in the mire. When we go out to see a godly man in and of himself, we go to see a reed shaken with the winde: Therefore while the godly man sticketh close to the rock, and layeth his fast hold on this pillar, he will stand like a mountain that cannot be moved.

2. They are left sometimes to the dominion of sin, that so they may discern between the drudgery to sin and Satan, and the obedience to God. The godly sometimes finde a wearisomnesse, and tediousnesse in the worship of God; Its a grief to pray, to hear, to wait on God, therefore he lets them fall into the hands

Why God suffers the godly to fall into sin.

hands of sin, that finding the bitter bondage thereof, they may the better esteem of Gods service. Thus God did with the Israelites, *Deut. 28.48. They who would not serve God, should be compelled to serve their enemies, in hunger and nakednesse and all misery*; by this means they should see the great difference between Gods service and their adversaries: Thus God will make thee with the Church to say, *I will return to my own husband, for it was better with me then now*, *Hosea 1.* Oh the joy and comfort that I had in obedience to God, but now am forced to feed on husks, while there is Manna in my Fathers house.

3. *They are suffered to fall, that their recovery may more demonstrate the power and goodnesse of God.* To cure a relapse doth evidence the art of the Physitian; what rejoycing is there in heaven at such a cure? *This our son was dead but is alive, was lost, but is found.* Hereby also they can give real warning to all others to take heed by them: Take them for an example, lest God make thee an example: This is to turn thee into a pillar of salt, that others may hear and fear, and take heed how they give way to the beginnings of sinne, lest that at last carry all away captive.

Use.

*Use of Instruction,* That all such, how great or eminent in profession soever, are to be arraigned for hypocrites, who live in the constant committing of grosse sins: Thou who givest such a lust peaceable possession over thee; whatsoever thy parts, thy abilities, thy humiliations have been, yet thou art rotten in the bottom. *David* cannot think himself upright, till he hath cast off the dominion of every presumptuous sinne. How should this enter like a two-edged sword into the heart of many a man? Wilt thou pray, hear? wilt thou read the Scripture? be reputed of as godly, and yet give way to such or such a grosse sin, whether it be publique, or whether it be secret, the Lord knoweth, and thy own conscience knoweth, therefore live no more in such guile and hypocrisie. The Prophets of old contested with such hypocrites that would abound in sacrifices, frequent the Temple, yet live in whoredom, covetousnesse, and idolatry: Oh consider, if the treasure of thy heart be any where but on God,



God, though thou pray and come to the Church every Sabbath day, thou art deceiving of thy self.



S E R M. XXX.

Of the Aggravations of Sinne.

P S A L. 19.13.

*And I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*

**T**His is part of that benefit and great advantage which will accrew to *David* by that two-fold mercy he praieyth for, which was remission of the guilt of sinne, and preservation against the power of it.

*I shall be innocent from the great transgression*] By the great transgression some have understood one particular sinne, viz. that against the holy Ghost, as if *David's* meaning were, That this mercy of God keeping him from the dominion of sinne, would hereby also preserve him from that unpardonable sin. The *Septuagint* translate it, *ἀπὸ τῆς μεγάλης ἁμαρτίας*, as if it were some high and notorious sinne; as he is called the Prophet, which was so in respect of excellency, above others. But the Hebrew word for great, doth sometimes signifie the greatness of quality, and at other times the greatness of quantity. Therefore in the margin you have much for great, and we may well take in both here, *I shall be innocent from every great transgression, and from multiplying many transgressions*; for commonly when a man falls into one sinne, its like tumbling down the hill, he cannot stop, but falleth from one to another, till he come to the very bottom. As the Apostle speaks of a chain of

graces, 1 Pet. 1. *We must to faith adde temperance, &c.* So there is a chain of sins. Men adde one vice to another, and so of themselves would never stop till they were in irrecoverable destruction; so that it is both the *greatnesse of quality* and *greatnesse of quantity* that *David* would be innocent from.

*Doct.*

*That its a very great mercy to be kept from great transgressions. Such make a greater wound upon the heart, greater estrangement from God, and make the cure more difficult. To pursue this point. Consider*

*Of great and little sins.*

1. *That all sins are not equal*, as the Stoicks thought, and as the Papists do calumniate the Protestants for such a Doctrine: We hold indeed every sinne deserveth eternal damnation, but that doth no more imply we make all sins equal, then they do all mortal sinnes equal, when yet every one of them, they say, merits eternal wrath. That sins do differ, one is farre more grievous then another, appeareth, in that the Scripture saith, some have sinned more then others. Those that delivered Christ to *Pilate*, are said to have a greater sinne upon them then *Pilate*, John 19. 11. So some sins are compared to a *Camel*, others to a *Gnat*; some to a *Moat*, others to a *Beam*, Mat. 7. 3. Some are called sinnes of daily incurſion, others conscience and soul-wasting sins by Divines. There is therefore a great difference among sins, and greater sinnes if not repented of, will have greater stripes, greater punishment; or if repented of, they require greater sorrow and humiliation, its a greater matter to get the pardon of them, they interrupt that sweet Communion and holy fellowship the soul hath with God; and although it be all one to God, to pardon great sins as well as lesse, and the blood of Christ doth as easily drown these Camels, as these Gnats, yet God hath commanded greater humiliation for some sinnes then others, because hereby God is more dishonoured, and the afflicted soul may hereby testifie the greater grief it hath, because God is displeased. *David* is said to do all things according to Gods heart, save in the matter of *Uriah*, 1 King. 15. 5. *David* had many other failings, but that was a great transgression, had *David* been innocent from that, his bones had not been so sore broken.

2. It cannot be denied, but that even from little sinnes, its our duty to be kept innocent, neither doth a godly heart use to account any sinne little. We see Paul greatly humble for the sinfull motions and thoughts of his heart. David did but cut off the hemme of Sauls garment, and his heart did smite him for it, 1 Sam. 24.6. Hezekiah also humbled himself for the pride of his heart, 2 Chr. 32.26. These are such little motes, that the worlds throat would swallow down without any pain, but the godly cannot account any sinne little, *Nihil est in hoste despiciendum*, sinne being Gods enemy and thy souls enemy, nothing is to be contemned in it, as a little matter, to say as Lot of that City, *Is it not a little one?* Mat. 12.36. Of every idle word a man shall give an account at the day of judgement. Can that then be accounted little, for which a man must give an account at the day of judgement, which could not be pardoned without the blood of Christ, God and man? There must be a prize of infinite worth laid down to cleanse it away.

3. As wicked men use to extenuate their sinnes, to make them little or none at all: so the godly many times through tenderesse do aggravate their sinnes, and look upon them as too great, they look thorow a multiplying glasse upon them. Thus the wicked and the godly are in two contrary dispositions. The wicked man makes nothing of all his great transgressions, he thinks it a folly to be troubled about them. Though he did sin, yet with Saul he hath this and that excuse to diminish the guilt of it; but thus do not the godly. David in his penitential Psalms hideth nothing from God, speaks the utmost against himself, yea sometimes the godly are too much cast down about their sins, as we see in the incestuous person. Though the godly may look upon some sinnes as great, yet they must take heed of Cains speech, to think *They are greater then they can bear*, greater then Gods great mercies, or Christs great obedience: Oh let not the devil and thy own unbelief so farre seduce thee, as to make thee heighten thy own fears and sins beyond all due considerations, *Cui absoluitur, qui sibi non est innocens?*

4. We can hardly in an absolute sense say, this sinne is greater then another, but in a comparative and respect sense: So that



sinne which exceeds another in hainousnesse, from one circumstance, may by the same sinne be exceeded in another respect. We say, the sinnes against the first Table, are greater then the sinnes against the second Table, and yet in some circumstances some sinnes against the second Table may be greater then some against the first: So that a Christian is diligently to weigh every circumstance in confession and repentance about sinne. As some respects make such a sinne very heavy, so it may be other respects do much take off from the burden of it.

The aggravations of sin.

I.  
From the matter of them.

These things premised, let us consider *from whence the greatnesse of a sinne may arise*, or what are those particulars that make one sin greater then another, and so may denominate a man a great sinner. And

First, *Many sins are great from the matter of them*: Their very nature doth consist in a great deformity and contrariety to all goodnesse. The Apostle doth *Rom. 1.* & *1 Tim. 1.3* and in many other places make a large enumeration of such sinnes. Though every sinne be a transgression of the Law, yet some sinnes do it more notoriously then others; as every disease is a privation of health, yet some do in a helpleesse manner deprive of health more then others. Thus some Schoolmen say, though a meer privation doth not *recipere magis* or *minus*, yet *ratione materiali*, because of the subject or foundation of it, so it may: as the disease meerly in that it is privative, doth not receive more or lesse, but because of the matter of it, which is humours in the overflowing of them, so it doth. So that if you would judge whether a man be a greater sinner, consider the nature of the sins which he liveth in; Are they such as do grossly and manifestly oppose all honesty and piety? Then this man hath nothing to hide, or cover himself withall, he is under a great transgression, and such are the sins that are generally committed every where, not your little petty ones, as the world deemeth them, but great notorious ones; they are plague sores, not itch spots. The Apostles Catalogue of sins are in all Towns, in all Families almost committed: sinnes of prophane impiety against God, of horrible injustice against man, do fill most places, these are called crying sins; that is an

an excellent expression which the Scripture giveth to some sins rather than others. Thus *Gal. 4. 10.* *Abels blood crieth*, and *Jam. 5. 4.* *The unjust defrauding of the poor labourer crieth to God.* Oh what a dreadfull thing is this! In many mens lives you shall hear no praiers, no tears, no cries, because of their sinnes; but their sinnes they cry, they importune aloud for justice and vengeance. Thus instead of crying praiers they have crying sins. The greatnesse of a sinne is then most remarkable, when the nature of it is most notoriously contrary to what is good. The Schoolmen do well call the greatnesse of sinne, *Gravitas peccati*, a metaphor from heavie and weighty bodies, which do incline and carry downwards; so sinne presseth and weigheth down the soul towards hell, which was made to soar upwards and enjoy God. Hereupon they give us a good distinction of a twofold weight of sinne, the one is essential, the other accidental; Essential is that which the very nature of a sinne cannot be without, but whensoever that sinne is committed, it carrieth a very great, heavie weight with it, such are *perjury, blasphemy, adultery, murder, &c.* Accidental is that, which of it self is not so great, but from other extrinsecal respects, becomes to be most heavie. Thus *Adams sinne in eating of the forbidden fruit*, is said to be the heavieft of all sins, not from the essential nature of it, but the accidental considerations about it, such as *Adams creation in Gods Image*, and thereby having no *fomes peccati*, no seed of sinne to encline him, as also the great hurt and damage which came to mankind by it, putting them both in a mortal and damnable estate. The essential weight and greatnesse of a sinne must alwaies be distinguished from the accidental.

Secondly, *Transgressions become great from the object against whom they are committed.* Thus *Ceteris paribus* all sins immediately committed against God, are farre greater then those that are against man, and so against man, those sins that are against his life, are greater then those that are against his wealth or riches. This is very necessary to consider, because that men make no matter of sinnes against God, especially if not punishable by the Laws of the Land where they live, for

2.  
From the ob-  
ject against  
whom they are  
committed.

people do commonly judge of a sins greatnesse by the temporal danger they are in, and the punishment they are obnoxious to by the Laws of the Land. Hence if they live in a Nation, where some sins are made a Law, they make no matter of them: The former *Romans* worshipped God without Idols or Images, because he was a Spirit, but the later with them: So with some an oath was holy and inviolable: Others did not punish perjuries: The *Lacedemonians* allowed of artificial theft: The Laws of the *Persians* allowed the incestuous marriages of mothers and daughters: The Laws of the *Tribunes* was to throw old decrepit men from high mountains, and *Plato's* Law was to have women common. Thus where the Laws of a Nation allow or command wickednesse (though indeed such are not Laws, but corruptions and sins) therein the common people make no scruple, they have no trouble; but this you must know, when you would go to finde out the greatnesse of a sinne, you must not presently judge of it by the Laws of a Land, for Magistrates many times regard the hurt of the Commonwealth, more then the dishonour of God. Thus perjury is not punished by death, when theft is, yet perjury is a farre more hainous sinne, so that we are not to regard the danger that the Law of the Land may put us in, so much as the danger that the word of God speaks of. Now that is clear for this, Those sinnes that are immediately committed against him, his person, name and Majesty, or Ordinances, they are far greater then other sins against men, because the object is infinitely more excellent then any man: So that as an offence done to a man of honour, is greater then to a poor peasant, so any offence against God, cloathed with such Divine Majesty, and whose Glory is to be preserved though in the destruction of the whole world, must needs be greater then any against mortal man, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *If one man sinne against another, the Judge shall judge him, but if a man sinne against the Lord, who shall intreat for him? Eli's* sons did sinne against the Lord, because they offended against his worship, and polluted the Ordinances by gross prophanenesse, who can intreat for such? saith *Eli*: Here you see sins immediately committed against God



God or his name, worship, are very hardly pardoned. Hence David, Psal. 51. in those finnes of murder and adultery, was most troubled because God was offended by them, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight.* Did he not grievously sinne against Uriah, first wronging him in his wife, and then taking his life from him? Yes certainly, but that which did most stick upon him, and inwardly wound him, was Gods displeasure. Thus *Matth. 18. 24* our finnes against God are compared to *Talents*, but our finnes against man to *Pounds*: On then that the people of this age would consider that the greatnesse of a sinne lieth in the immediate offence of it to God! Therefore cursing and swearing, and blaspheming are grievous finnes, heresies and damnable doctrines, denying the Deity of Christ, the Authority of the Scriptures; as also the contemning of the Sabbaths, the Ministry and Ordinances; all these are great transgressions, because they do more immediately reflect on God or that which directly relateth to him, then other finnes do: Oh consider, thou that art a curser and a swearer, or an heretick, or a profaner of Gods day and his Ordinances, thou art a great and grievous sinner, look upon thy self so, and let thy repentance and humiliation be as great!

Thirdly, *The greatnesse of a sinne doth arise according to the light more or lesse that we have to discern them to be finnes.* The more easily, even without any teaching or much institution we can know a sinne to be so, and yet commit it, in that respect we make our transgression a great transgression. The rape committed by the *Benjamites* upon the *Levites* wife, *Judg. 20.* is made an astonishing sinne, the like was never heard of. And the incestuous person committed such a sinne as was not to be named amongst the *Heathens*. Now why were these so great sins? because the natural light ingrafted in every mans conscience doth condemn such waies. Thus the Apostle *Rom. 1.* doth speak of *unnatural* finnes, yet the world is full of such sins as are condemned by the light of nature, thieving, lying, unjust buying and selling, adultery and fornication; These are condemned by that natural conscience within a man; You need no Preacher, no Bible to convince thee of this, yet how diso-

3.  
From the light  
against which  
they are com-  
mitted.

disobedient are men to this unquestionable light? Thus childrens disobedience to their parents, contemning them in their old age, or not honouring of them with due maintenance, is an unnatural sinne; For the husband to spend his estate in drink and upon whores, while his wife and children are in great extremity; The Apostle calls such a man *worse then an Infidel*, its an unnatural sinne, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. It would be too large to instance in all the kinds of unnatural sins, there are sins called *bruta peccata* beastly and lustful sins not to be named; yet oh that such sinnes which the Heathens would abhorre, were not practised and delighted in by Christians!

Thus for natural light, so the more spiritual light we have: The more the Sunne of the Gospel doth arise in our Horizon, discovering any one sinne more then another, if yet we do it, we sinne the *greater transgression*: What is the reason that unbelief is so great a sinne, the damning sinne, and faith on the contrary, whether in the acts of knowledge, assent, or fiducial application, are such great duties above all others, but because the Gospel-light doth instruct us herein? If thou art affected with the weight of thy sinne, and doest not believe on Christ for pardon, This unbelief is thy great sin, as *Augustine* said of *Judas*, '*Pejus de peccato poenituit, quam peccavit*, his unbelieving trouble and sorrow for his sin was worse then his sinne: why then cometh it about, that as honey though honey, yet is very troublesome to a sore wound, so these precious truths of the Gospel, like so much honey should yet create even doubts and troubles in thee? Some have not been afraid to say, that no sinne damneth but unbelief; their meaning is, its not any sinne committed, if repented of, could damn thee, if thou by faith didst relie on Christ: Oh know that unbelief in Gospel-light, and where Scripture-revelation is, is the great Whale-sinne, as it were devouring thy soul, and making Christ wholly ineffectual and unprofitable; As if a patient should take that potion, he knoweth would presently cure him, and spill it on the ground:

I shall only name a fourth particular at this time, which aggravates a sinne, making of it great, and that is, *The worse*

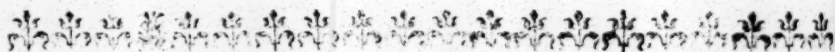
*a mans*

a mans end is in committing wickednesse, the more malicious and spitefull he is at godlinesse, the greater is his sinne. If a man vex and trouble a godly man, because of some personal injuries or supposed wrongs received by him, its not so great a sinne, as to hate him for his godlinesse, and because his waies are more holy then thine. The Pharisees sins against Christ were great transgressions, because they did all against him out of envie, and from that conviction upon them, that the doctrine and life of Christ was above theirs. Thus if a man should be so wicked to tempt another to sinne, meerly that he might damn that mans soul, its a farre more hainous sinne, then to tempt him for some delight or profit he shall receive thereby. Bodinus lib. 5. de Repub. cap. 6. p. 951. relateth an high kinde of wickednesse to this kinde: Briefly this, An Italian was at deadly feud with one once his familiar friend, and for ten years sought occasion to satisfie his wicked revenge, but being frustrated of his hope, pretended reconciliation, and having one time an advantage, sets on the man, overcometh him, and is going to kill him; The miserable man desireth him to spare his life; the revengesfull man said, he would do it, on condition he would renounce God and all the benefits of his soul; Though this was hard to the poor man, yet fear of death makes him renounce God and salvation, upon which that wretched malicious enemy killeth him with this boast; Now he had satisfied his revenge, for he had not onely killed his body, but damned his soul. By this you see, that even among wicked men, some have more devilish ends then others, and there are too many that have such fore eies, that they cannot endure the bright beams of a godly mans life, which doth so much discover their darknesse, and condemn it. Indeed these ends are only known to God, and therefore thou maiest be a great transgressor before him, when applauded before men. Therefore the more wicked thy end is in sinning, the greater transgression it is; for although the Schoolmen say, *Propter finem operantis non amittunt peccata speciem qua sumi potest ex fine operis*, that the end of a man in sinning the more corrupt it is, the more defiled it makes the action.

Use. Of Instruction, Although none are to give way to,



or to slight lesse finnes, seeing they are against a great God, and the hell they deserve is not a little hell; yet this doctrine doth awaken great sinners, of which all places are full, that their repentance and humiliation be likewise great. Are thy finnes crying finnes? Oh be frequent in crying prayers: All that the wicked man doth, is to excuse his sinne, to make it so little, that they may not seem great; but when once thy conscience shall be awakened, then nothing will appear greater then thy sinne to thee, Then *Cain* crieth, *its greater then he can bear*: great finnes must have great sorrow and great reformation, such a Camell as thou art, canst not go through a needle, till thy bunch be taken off. Cry for great mercy, say O Lord, they must be great mercies that must cover these great finnes.



## S E R M. XXXI.

*More Aggravations of Sinne.*

P S A L. 19. 13.

*And I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*

**I**T remaineth that we deliver unto you further particulars, from whence the greatnesse of a sinne doth arise: And

5.  
From Mercies  
received.

First, *The greater mercies and favours we have had from God, the more kindenesse we have received from him, the greater is our transgression when we do offend him.* Ingratitude doth greatly aggravate sinne towards God, as it doth also amongst men; Therefore Unthankfulness is in the black book of those dismall finnes *Paul* enumerates, *Rom. 1.* See this notably in *Joseph*, when solicited to lust by his Mistress, *Gen. 39. 9.* he aggravateth all the kindenesse and honours he had received from

from Potiphar, *My Master (saith he) hath committed all things to me, There is none greater in the house then I, neither hath he kept any thing from me save his Wife, How then can I do this great wickednesse and sinne against God?* He calls it a great wickednesse because it was accompanied with such unthankfulness to Potiphar; Hence it comes about that all the sinnes of Christians are greater in this respect then any heathens sins, because you have received more love from God, he hath done more for you then for them: Therefore there is greater wickednesse and rebellion in your sinnes, *Mat. 11.23. Thou Capernaum that art lifted up to heaven, shalt be thrown down to hell:* Those that were exalted above others by the means of grace, and externall dispensations of Gods love, should be debased below others: Hence also such as beleeve not or are reformed by the Word of life, they are made to be worse sinners, and in a more dreadfull estate, then those of *Sodom and Gomorrah*; This then is a true saying, and worthy of all your attention, The more love, the more spirituall dispensations you live under, the more bloudy are your sinnes: you that enjoy the Gospel of Christ, your Oaths, and drunkennesse, your lusts, and unrighteousnesse, are farre greater sins then those of the Heathens; you are weeds in a garden, you are ground ploughed and sowed, and yet are as barren as a wilderness; Oh that the great God would convince you of the truth, Thou a Christian, thou a professor of thy faith in the Gospel, and yet a grosse sinner; All thy sinnes are as red as scarlet: There is this condemnation upon them, that thou stumblest in the light; In the midst of all Gods grace thou retainest thy beastly pleasures; *Moses* and the Prophets were so astonished at such ingratitude and rebellion in the *Israelites*, that they cry out to the heavens and the earth to take notice of it. Oh beloved. There is an astonishing and amazing consideration to be had of all prophane wickednesse by those who live under the Gospel: When we see a grosse sin we should lift up our hands to heaven as at some amazing wonder; Oh heavens, O earth, such a man do these things, and yet know the Scriptures, live where the Gospel is preached! *David* aggravated the injuries he recei-

ved that they were from a friend, from one who had been often in sweet communion together: and thus certainly the Lord may aggravate every Christians finnes, Thou hast been baptized received into the Church, separated from the world, taken the badge of Christ upon thee, sworn allegiance to him, and for thee to forsake him, and to rise up in rebellion against him is a great transgression: and truly even those that are indeed godly in this respect have more aggravation in their sinne then any wicked man can have, because they have received more from God, been entertained in his private chamber, admitted into the *Holy of Holies*, when others have been in the outward Courts; The more Priviledges, the more experiences they have, the greater in this respect are their transgressions. Thus God aggravated all his kindnesse shewed to David, when he had done so foulely in the matter of *Uriah*; Therefore as *Absolom* said to *Hushai*, *Is this thy kindnesse to thy friend?* so may we say to the godly man apostatizing or decaying, *Is this thy kindnesse to God?* to that God, who hath revealed his glory to thee, who hath taken thee to the mount of transfiguration sometimes, not admitting others? Is this thy kindnesse to Christ, for all those tears, and all that blood he powred out for thy sake? Oh let us all consider, that this particular may send both the wicked and godly away wounded in heart, for all their transgressions are great, because all within the Church have had great priviledges.

6.  
Spirituell sinnes  
greater then  
carnall.

2. *Spirituell finnes taken in their own nature and careris paribus, are greater then carnall bodily finnes.* The Schoolmen have a saying, That spirituell finnes are of a greater guilt, but bodily finnes of a greater infamy or reproach. Now spirituell finnes, we call all such as do immediately lodge in the spirit and soul of a man, though sometimes demonstrated by outward actions, such are *pride, envy, malice, heresie, Idolatry*; these are all spirituell finnes though externally vented, because they are immediately seated in the soul, What makes the devils such great sinners? they are called unclean spirits, because they are the *spirituell wickednesses in high places*, Ephe. 6. The devils being spirits are not capable of bodily finnes, and yet they are full of great wickednesse, because their spirituell  
natures



natures are defiled. The Pharisees were worse sinners and further off from heaven then Publicans and harlots, because because the latter were carnall sinners: The Pharisees were spirituall wicked, and therefore said in a peculiar manner to be of their father the devil. Thus Idolatry is a very great sinne. When the *Isaaelites* had made a golden Calf, they are said, *Exod. 31. 31.* To have sinned a great sinne: and commonly Idolatry is called *Βδέλυγμα*, *The abomination*, for the foul nature of it. The sinne against the *holy Ghost* is of a spirituall nature, consisting in the malicious enmity of the heart, and against Christ and all his wayes; so self-righteousnesse, and self-fullnesse, thereby we are kept from hungering and thirsting after Christ and his benefits, all these are spirituall finnes: Now as God because he is a Spirit, delighteth in those who are spirituall worshippers of him, who serve him in their Spirit, so the devil doth most delight in those wicked men, using such as the fittest and ablest instruments to promote his kingdom, who are spiritually wicked: this may be called the wickednesse of wickednesse, as the Hebrew phrase is excellent, *Hof. 10. 15.* Their Idolatry and spirituall sinfullnesse, is called in the Hebrew, the evil of evil, as the *Song of Songs*, the Lord of Lords, *malitia malitia vestra*, as its translated: Oh then, though thou art no Publican, no harlot, thou canst thank God thou art no prophane or debauched man; yet thou mayest be a spirituall sinner like the devil, one, whose pride, malice and envy, is wholly against godlinesse and good men, and this is the evill of evils, This is the transgression of transgressions; bodily finnes make us to be accounted of as beasts, but these as devils.

3. The greatnesse of a sinne doth arise from the greatnesse and eminency of the subject who do commit it it. All great mens sins are great sins; The Eclipse of the Sunne is a prodigious sign, if the foundations be rotten all the house must fall: Hence you shall reade the Prophets sharply reproving finnes of great men in place and power, as being the head and cause of all evil to others. The sins of Magistrates, of Ministers, of noble men and rich men are according to their place more offensive and dishonouring of God then other mens finnes are. Hence

7.  
Sin is aggravated by the greatnesse of the subject that commits it.

## Of the Aggravations of Sinne.

Lev. 4. the Priests sacrifice for sinne was as much as the whole Congregation was to offer ; and so the Rulers sacrifice for sinne, was a male-kid, whereas every private person, was only to offer a female. By the difference of sacrifices we might gather the difference of finnes, what an antidote would this against great mens finnes if rightly considered ? for thou that art above others in place and dignity ; Thou art above others in their finnes likewise ; Thy spots are more lothsome, Thy finnes are more conspicuous, as any deformity in a fair body. Thy life should be as much above others in exemplary godlinesse, as thy estate and honours are : for thee to swear, or be unclean, or drunk like one of the vile and mean ones of the world, is a dishonour to thee ; Magistrates are called gods because of that holinesse which should be in all their administrations ; That was an admirable saying of a great man, *Pereat magis totis, regnum quam ut semel contra Deum peccem* : Aristotle saith, the perpetuall duration of things cometh from the simple and daily motion of the Sun from the East to the West, but the corruption of things is because of the oblique motion of the Sun through the Zodiaque. The oblique motion of those that are of great place and dignity ~~works great place and dignity~~ works great corruption in all others : *Nuge* are *blasphemie* in the mouth of a Minister, said *Hierom* : But how contrary is the world to this truth ? great men think Religion below them, wickednesse is a gracefull thing with them, and those who would be ashamed of the practicall self-denying way of Christ, glory in the works of the flesh and the devil ; but remember God is greater then thou art, and *potentes potenter punientur*.

8.  
From the  
scandall and  
offence that  
may be in a  
sinne.

4. The greatnesse of a transgression doth arise from the scandall and offence that may be in it, to seduce others and draw them on to sinne ; All those finnes that are scandalous, which encourage others to do the like, and make the name of God to be blasphemed, must needs be heavier finnes then others. The greatness of such finnes our Saviour doth terribly express, *Mat. 18. 7.* *Wo be to him by whom offences come, It were better a mill-stone were hung about his neck, and he thrown into the Sea* : That expression denoteth an extraordinary aggravation

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vation in such finnes. It was for such finnes that the Primitive Church required publique repentance and humiliation for, and this was the satisfaction ancient Writers speak of, that afterwards the Papists abused to the dishonour of Christ, Paul was so carefull to offend others this way, 1 Cor. 8.13. that he said, *He would eat no meat while the world stood rather then offend his brother*: Oh then how wilt thou pleade for thy self whose whole life is a scandall? Thou livest a reproach to God and to Christianity, Many are the more hardened to do wickedly because thou dost so; As for a passive scandall, such as the Pharisees took by corrupt mis-interpretations of Christs doctrine and his way, none can help; nor are we to matter that, but an active scandall, that which is a plain undoubted sinne, and giveth just occasion to others to do the like, Wo be to them that do so, God told *David*, by his finnes he had made the enemies of God to blaspheme; and therefore his affliction was to be the more bitter: And so the Apostle *Rom. 2. The Name of God is blasphemed among the Heathen*: Oh take heed of such finnes that have a pestilentiall infection with them, They do not only damn thy self but thy children, thy neighbours, thy followers with thee.

5. *The more consent, delight, and contriving, or perswading thou usest to a sinne, the greater is thy iniquity.* The authors and instigators to a sinne do more greatly transgresse then the meer actors sometimes, *Job. 19. 11.* Christ saith the Pharisees had a greater sinne upon them then *Pilate*, because they moved and instigated him to destroy that innocent one; Thus not *Joab* but *David* is severely chastised by God for killing *Uriah*, He was the murderer, He was guilty of innocent blood though he did not immediatly kill him, because he counselled and commanded thereunto, *Rom. 1. ult.* The Apostle reckoning up divers kinde of grosse sinners, concludeth they not only do such things but delight in them that do so; Therefore if thou art in thy self civill and sober, yet thou procurest and inticest others to drunkenness, thou lovest their company, thou takest pleasure in their acquaintance, thou art a greater sinner then those beasts are, for thou counsellest or thou approvest and delightest in them; Whereas the Apostle

9.  
The more  
consent and  
delight in sin  
the greater  
it is.

*Eph.*



*Eph. 3.* commands us to have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse but rather reprove them; yet these great transgressions are too frequent; men though they themselves will not do such or such wicked actions, yet they will secretly countenance or counsell, or do openly delight in them that do them, Know thou hast the greater sinne.

**PO.**  
Hypocrisie in  
sinning doth  
aggravate sin.

6. The greatnesse of a sinne may arise from the secret dissimulation hiding or covering of it. To sinne and yet to appear as if we were holy, or had done our duty; Therefore the saying is, *Simulata sanctitas est duplex iniquitas*; The hypocrite is a great sinner, for although there be no scandall in his sinne, and he avoideth that reproach to God by apparent and visible iniquity; yet as we say of some feavers, The colder and better temper he feeleth to be of, the greater heat he hath within, and therefore the more dangerous: So it is here, Thou art secretly and closely a sinner against God, yet outwardly doest appear good and laudable, thy wickednesse is the stronger within, the more poison is in thy heart: If thy wickednesse did break forth, it may be it would not be so ill with thee as now. See what an aggravation God putteth on Achans sinne, *Josh. 7. 11.* They have taken of the cursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled, ~~and have also stolen, and dissembled,~~ and have put it even amongst their stuff: This hiding, and covering, the more subtilty and craft to daub over the matter, argues the stronger corruption, Davids craft, and covering of the sinne about *Uriah*, was a bitter ingredient, and made his bones more broken, as appeareth, *Psal. 51.* by that passage, *Thou delightest in truth in the inward parts*, The more therefore thou coverest and pleadest, the worse it is.

**II.**  
From the frequent committing of a sinne.

7. The more frequent a sinne is committed, and the oftner it is acted, this makes a transgression greater. So we told you, the word Great doth signifie also much, or many sinnes multiplied over and over. *Psal. 78. 40.* David makes this aggravation, That the Israelites did often provoke God, Idolatry upon Idolatry, rebellion upon rebellion: and Paul puts this circumstance in to aggravate his wickednesse while persecutor, *Acts 26. 11.* He did often punish them: To fall once or twice in a sinne, may

may be from infirmity, but frequently to commit such sinnes argueth an habit and a strong inclination to them; and should not this be as terrible as lightning and thunder to many auditors? Their oaths are frequent and often, their lascivious and unrighteous waies are a constant trade and practice; May they not say as *David*, they are more then the hairs of the head for number? oh that the devil should so farre bewitch thee and harden thee as to live quietly and merrily in the multitude of such sinnes committed by thee, one of them were enough to make thee go bowed down and mourning all the day long, but thou art secure when an Army of sins compasse thee about.

8. *Apostacy or falling from our former graces, our former love and zeal to God, is a great transgression, as appeareth Revel. 2.* where such are bid to repent quickly; oh make haste to get out of those decaies and relapses; God will make those sins bitter to thee: The not entertaining or receiving the Word of God at first, is not so great a sin as after the entertainment of it a while, then to go back again, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21. you have a Beacon set on fire there to warn al: *If those that by the knowledge of Christ are again intangled in their lusts, their latter end is worse, for they had better never have known the way of Righteousnesse when to go from it at last;* and well may Apostacy be called a grievous sin, because there is so much perfidiousnesse in it; We break our promise and covenant made with God, and then hereby we proclaim a dislike of God, and a kinde of repentance that ever we entred into his service, as if there were more pleasure and content to be had in the world and sin, rather then in God: Hence God asketh what fault they could finde in him when they forsook him and did cleave to Idols; for men that never tasted of the sweetnesse of grace, and never had communion with God, to refuse him and close with the world, is no wonder, for there is dust to dust, like to like: but for those who have had a sight of *Canaan*, though they have not entred into it, to return to *Egypt* again, is very intolerable; oh then take heed of decaies and consumptions in the way of grace, for these do greatly provoke God.

9. *Lukewarmnesse in matters of Religion makes a man a great*  
M m *sinner*

12.

Apostacy from  
Gods waies is  
a great sinne.

13.

Luke. warm-  
nesse.

*sinner before God*; To see a man active in the world, hot in pursuing his own interests, but then for matter of Religion to be merely indifferent; as *Erasmus* professed himself when he said, that if the Church should determine *Arrianism* or *Pelagianism* to be true Christianity, he would assent to it. Moderation is a grace, but lukewarmnesse and indifferency in Gods glory or our own soul, is an high sinne, opposite to one of the choicest graces of Gods Spirit, which is zeal and holy fervency, such a lukewarmnesse *Eliab* who went up into heaven in a fiery chariot, a fit reward for his zeal, cried out against, *Why halt ye between two: if God be God serve him, if Baal be God serve him*, 1 King. 18. 19. The detestablenesse of this lukewarmnesse, is wonderfully described, *Rev. 3. 16. Because thou art neither cold or hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.* We have scarce such an expression in all Scripture, and it is to instruct us how lothsome such men are to God, That are any thing, and will do any thing to the dishonour of God, to save themselves; This as a wise man said of a middle way in politicall matters, That many times they who go in such a neutrall way, they do neither *amicos parare* or *inimicos tollere*, is alwaies true here; They make not God their friend, neither is the devil or conscience their less enemy; But as they say of the Bat which is neither mouse or Bird, but pretending to either, is devoured of both.

*Use of Exhortation*, To pray that thou maist be preserved from every great transgression; Though thou canst not be without sin, yet that thou maist not have those scarlet sinnes, those camell sinnes may not be swallowed by thee: Oh know as thy sinne is great, so God is a great God, his anger is great anger, and he hath appointed a great day to judge such sins, what then shall such little stubble as thou art do before such a consuming fire? The generall sinnes that most men live in are great sins, and therefore no wonder if God bring his fore and great judgements upon us, when we sin grievously we are punished grievously.

*Use of Direction*, To those who cry out of their great sins, so great they say, that they cannot bear them, they overwhelm them, so great, that the very terrour of them doth swallow them



them up, let such consider first, there must be great humiliation, as *Mary Magdalene* was a great sinner, and her mourning was great; The incestuous person committed a great sin, and his repentance was great; Not that the greatness of sorrow must satisfie God, no, Christs blood, and not thy tears must do that, but because hereby thou manifestest the truth and heartiness of thy sorrow; judge thy self a great offender, few have dishonoured God as I have done, the chiefest sinner of many thousands I have been: Oh this will set open the floodgates as it were of thy soul. But

2. Remember the mercies of God are great and many mercies, Thou hast multitude of sins, he hath multitude of mercies; Thou hast great sins, and he hath mercy as great as himself, which is infinite and incomprehensible; when thou hast thought and thought, yet thou art not able to comprehend his mercy, but it is as far above thy sins as his nature is above thine.

3. The Obedience and sufferings of Christ they are of a great vertue; Can it be for a little thing, that the Son of God should be incarnated and suffer for; If thy sins be great, his sufferings were great, his obedience was great, let not sin be great and Christ little.

Lastly, Let thy faith be great, that it may be said, O man, O woman, great is thy faith, great sins need great faith.



## S E C T. VII.

Of the Life and Power of Godliness  
in Churches, Persons, Duties;  
In opposition to Hypocrisie,  
Deadness and Formality.

## S E R M. XXXII.

*Of Gods Omniscieny, as a Mo-  
tive to the Truth and Reality of  
Grace.*

## R E V E L. 3. 1.

*I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest,  
and art dead.*



His last Book of the Scripture called the *Reve-  
lation*, doth it self need great revelation, to  
expound those many difficult and mysterious  
passages in it, which made some Commenta-  
tors passe it over, as *Cajetan*, professing that it  
did need *divinatione magis quam ingenio*, to expound it. But  
this

this third Chapter and the second are very plain, being the matter of seven Epistles commanded by Christ to be written to seven Churches in *Asia*; Why to these and no other, or whether by these is not intended a type of all Churches in future ages, is not my intent to dispute. The Text I have chosen is part of the fifth Epistle, which is to the Church in *Sardis*; and in this we may consider the Preface, the Body or substance of the letter, and the Conclusion. The Preface consists of those attributes given to Christ, which declare his Majesty, and sutable properties for those duties he requireth of the Church; because he hath the seven Spirits, and the seven Starres, therefore let the Angel of the Church dispense his duty with great vigilancy and industry. Whether by the seven Spirits, be meant the holy Ghost, in the severall and manifested gifts and operations thereof, Seven in the Scripture being a number to signifie plenty, *The barren hath born seven*: Or whether we are to understand real and true Angels, those celestial Spirits, which in great multitudes attend God, expecting his commands, as *Chap 5 6.* seemeth to imply, I shall not dispute: So neither will I enter into that controversie, Whether by Angel of the Church, be meant a true proper Angel, or one single Pastor in degree above other Ministers: Or whether it be taken collectively, for many Pastors, who joyntly did govern the Church: Or lastly, Whether it be the Church it self: These Disputes I wave, and come to the matter or substance of the letter; and there we may first observe a reprehension of the Angels sinne, which also belongs to the Church; as appeareth, *cap. 2. v. 7.* and that is, They were dead, though they had a name they lived. Secondly, Here is the evident conviction of this sinne, *I know thy works*, though other Churches did highly approve of them, and they had a fame over the world for their faith and piety; yet saith Christ, *I know thy works*, I see thy Religion and Piety is an empty, dead thing: Now in that Christ is said here to know their works, we have a plain argument for the Divine nature of Christ, for none but God knoweth all the works, that is, thoughts, counsels, studies and actions of all men, as appeareth *Jerem. 7. 10.* Hence we reade



that Christ many times knew what the thoughts of men were, especially John 2.25. *He needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man.* But I shall not insist on this: My purpose is to carry on the generall matter I have in hand, viz. The discovery of the guile and hypocrisie that is in mans heart, especially in matters of piety and religion, for which this Text is very pregnant, and therefore Observe,

*Observ.*

Of Gods omniscience.

God beholdeth with one single act all things past, present and to come.

*That God or Christs omniscience, whereby he knoweth all things in us, should greatly move us to the truth and reality of grace.* We should not wash the outside only, but indeavour a sound inside, because we have to do with a God that knoweth all things, we cannot hide our ends or principles from him, all our thoughts and motions of soul are plain and open to him. To discover this truth, take notice,

First, *That such is Gods knowledge, that by one single act he doth behold all things, past, present and to come, as together.* So that to us, although there is such a difference of time, as past and future, yet to God there is not: Therefore when we attribute prescience or foreknowledge to God, that is in respect of us, otherwise God beholds all things as present, without such difference. Thus 2 Pet. 3.8. *Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* Be not ignorant of this, saith the Apostle, implying thereby the consequence of this truth. Therefore Gods knowledge is called *simplex intuitus*, a direct beholding and looking on all things, as we do with our eye upon one particular object: Even as if a mans body were all an eye, he would see as well backward as forward, and the different positions of things would be no impediment to his sight; or as a man on an high tower, that seeth many passengers going by, one after another, though their motion be successive, yet the cast of his eye beholding them is in one moment. Hence the very Heathens called God, *totus oculus*. Thus you see God is omniscient, nothing is hid from him, and that he beholdeth all things in the most perfect and infallible manner, which great and glorious attribute the Scripture doth often speak of, as that which we often should meditate

meditate upon, but though in the general this truth be so great a motive to truth and sincerity of grace, yet some particulars about this knowledge do more closely work in this matter: As

1. *That not only our publique manifest Works are known to God, but all our secret Works, whether good or evil. Davids murder and adultery were carried on in secret waies, yet God beheld him all the while: Thou didst it secretly, saith God, but I will punish thee in the open sun. Thus Mat. 6. concerning private alms and private prayers, God is said to see in secret: Now what a sharp spur and goad should this be to all uprightnesse; If I sinne in secret, though I hide it from all the world, though no man living knoweth of it, yet God he knoweth it, and we are more to tremble under his eye beholding of us, then if all the world did look upon us. The woman of Samaria was amazed, when she heard Christ admonishing her concerning the adulterer she lived with, Come (saith she) and see him that hath told me of all that ever I did, John 4. Oh set this consideration deeply upon thy heart, why should I commit this secret sinne? why should I be so carefull to hide it? God knoweth all that ever I did.*

1.  
He knows all  
our secret  
works.

2. Gods knowledge is not only of our secret works, as well as publique, but he knoweth the bottom and inside of our Works, as well as the outside: He seeth to the coar, as well as the skin, and this is chiefly meant here, Christ knew her works; why, what are those works? for the outward appearance very good and religious, else how could she have such a name, such a repute, so that there was nothing externally blame worthy, but all the fault was within; it followeth, *I have not found thy Works perfect; the original is, filled up, there was much emptinesse and vanity in them, they were not weighty and solid, there was an image but there wanted life. And thus the Pharisees were also discovered, they had a name, who but they, for external obedience to the Law? but our Saviour complaineth of their insides, Within they were ravening Wolves, within they were noisome Sepulchers, though painted without: Therefore are they so often pressed to make clean their hearts, and their inward parts. This*

2.  
He knoweth  
the botto  
me and inside  
of them.

(Beloved)

(Beloved) is of great concernment ; we think to put off God with the number of our duties, so many prayers, so many Sabbaths ; but God takes none, accounts of none before he weigheth them, *If they be such as come from sound and deep principles of grace, if they are from a regenerated nature, then they are received, otherwise they are cast away as empty chaff.* Oh then remember there is no religious duty, no holy performance, not this thou art about in hearing of the word at this time, but God searcheth to the bottom of it, he knoweth the inward worth of it, whether it have all that joyce and moisture of grace, which ought to be in all our duties ; and herein it is, that Gods judgement and mans is so different, *they judge according to outward appearance, they love and honour such for godly men, whom it may be God abhorreth as unsound and rotten hypocrites : That which is highly esteemed amongst men , is an abomination before God :* Our Saviour speaks it in this very point, and giveth this reason, *For God knoweth the heart,* Luke 16. 15. And the Apostle, *Rom. 2. ult.* speaks admirably to this, when he tels us of a *circumcision of the heart, whose praise is not of men but of God.* Oh this is comfortable, when in all thy religious waies thy praise is of God, he approveth thee, he liketh thee : As for the repute and esteem of men, that is a very deceitfull thing, they cannot look into the heart.

3.  
He knoweth  
the heart and  
seat of our  
works.

3. God doth not only know the inside as well as the outside of our works, but *he knoweth the heart, the seat of all our thoughts, and the principle of all our actions :* As *Jer. 17. 10. I the Lord search the heart, and try the reins.* Even as the Artificer that makes a watch, he knoweth all the parts and motions of it ; this closet of the heart, none hath a key to unlock it but God himself, so that before ever any thing cometh to works, before ever it be in thy practise, God seeth it in the womb as it were, and conception : As if a man could tell where the arrow would hit, before it be shot out of the bow : This knowing of the hearts of all men is attributed to God as his property only. 1 *King. 8. 39.* we reade of *Elisba* discovering what was in *Gebezies* heart, but this was because the Spirit of God did manifest it to him ; even as one man may



may know another mans heart, if he manifest it to him; but God of his own self knoweth the hearts of the children of men, hearts of wise men as well as fools; those who have the deepest counsels, and the most subtle turnings of spirit, God knoweth all these: Therefore the Church doth well from this argument to make her self take heed of idolatry in a private way, *Psal. 44.21. Shall not God search out this?* for he knoweth the secrets of the heart: Oh let every man use this goad, If I give way to such secret finnes, if I use such craft and dissimulation in any ungodly way, shall not God search out this, for he knoweth the secrets of the heart?

4. God doth not only know the heart, the seat of all the thoughts and motions of the soul, the shop where every thing is hammered into one shape or other, but *all the most subtle effects and products thereof*: The least moles cannot escape being espied: Now of all effects flowing from the heart of man, there are two things that are most subtle, that if it were possible would not be discovered by any knowledge humane or divine, and they are, first, Our thoughts. Secondly, Our aims and intentions: Of all the motions of the heart, there are none so unperceivable as these are, yet God knoweth all these.

4.  
And all the most subtle effects and products thereof.

First, *For the thoughts of a mans heart*, what millions are there of them in a day! The twinckling of the eye is not so sudden a thing as the thinking of a thought; yet those thousand and thousands of thoughts which passe from thee, that thou canst not number or make any reckoning of, they are all known to God, *Psal. 139.2.* We have there a notable Psalm, wherein *David* is greatly affected with this omniscience of God, *Thou knowest my down-sitting, and uprising, thou understandest my thought afarre off*: that is, God though afarre off in the heavens, so that we would think he did not take notice of what is done in earth, yet he so farre understands all things, that our very thoughts are known to him, or else our thoughts while they are afarre off, before they come to be expressly conceived and formed, while they are in the Chaos, in the confused womb of the soul, God knoweth them, he knoweth what we will think, before we do

I.  
Thoughts.

N n

think:

think: Surely this should refrain men, not only from sinfull lives, but also sinfull thoughts; this should make you be conscientious, not only about your actions, but your inward thoughts: Do not think them free; Did not our Saviour many times speak to the Pharisees against their thoughts and reasonings within themselves? *Think not to say within your selves*, said John Baptist also, *Mat. 3. 9.* The very Heathens thought a vertuous man would take heed what he thought, as well as what he did, how much rather should Christians, who have Christ himself expounding the Law of God to the very thoughts of men, so that unclean thoughts are adultery, malicious thoughts are murder. Hence *Mat. 6. 25, 27.* our Saviour spends a whole Chapter against *sinfull, distrustfull and carefull thoughts*: and observable is that of Peter to Simon Magus, *Act. 8. 22.* *Repent, if peradventure the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee*; as if his thoughts had been a greater sin then all his other wickednesse; so *Deut. 15. 9.* *Beware there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, &c.* Thus you see the Scripture makes it a necessary part to godlinesse to take heed of all kinde of sinfull thoughts; he that is not godly in his thoughts, is not truly godly in his actions; for if he refrain from wicked practises, it is in reference to men, and for outward considerations; if it were because of God, he would also mortifie all sinfull thoughts, because God doth as easily behold them as our actions: If therefore thou wouldst have this testimony of a sincere and upright man, observe how thou givest any lodging or intertainment to evil thoughts: Is not thy heart as full of proud, earthly, lustfull or vain thoughts as the sea is of water, as *Egypt* was once of locusts and caterpillars? Oh mourn under this, because God knoweth all thy vain and sinfull thoughts.

II.  
Aims.

The second effect from the heart, which is so difficultly found out, *are the aims and intentions of mens hearts*, to know why they do things: Certainly these are so subtile, that men are not sooner deceived in any thing, then about their aims; they think they do all for God, they comfort and support themselves as if every thing were in reference to God, whenas (alas) they know not the hypocrisie and rottennesse

ness of their hearts. The Pharisees they *did all things to be seen of men*, yet did they perceive this, or were they convinced of it? Did *Jehus* think they were only carnall and selfish motives that drew him out in all that zeal he shewed for God? Oh what godly man may not lye down with great shame and say, there is such a mystery of iniquity in his heart, that he knoweth not how to understand it? Well, though we do not many times discover our aims and intentions, yet God doth thy vain glory, thy wordly interests, they are all plain to him; he pulls off the vizor that is upon every mans heart, he draweth the curtain, and looketh upon things as they are: *Heb. 4. 12, 13.* the Word of God is there said to *divide between the joynts and the marrow*, that is, the *intima* and the *minima*, and is a *discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, so that every creature is open in his sight; as when a sacrifice was opened and divided into pieces, all the inwards of it were discovered. This consideration then must needs greatly provoke to sincerity of grace, for hypocrisie is in nothing more then in a mans ends: This hath been the great miscarriage of many, who have seemed to be in the ready way to heaven; They followed Christ for his *loaves*, They *knew Christ after the flesh*; and thereupon afterwards discovered they had no true root: but when we come to reason with our selves, God he knoweth why I pray, why I hear, why I walk in a more strict profession of Religion then others do; God knoweth what my aim and motive is in all this, whether it be principally for God, and from a love or delight in him, or whether it be from any corrupt and insincere respect: This will be of great consequence to us.

5. As God knoweth the thoughts and motions of our hearts for the present, so also for the future, *what we will think, and what we will do*; and this doth wonderfully exalt the knowledge of God, from all eternity he knew what thoughts, and what affections thou wouldst have. Thus Christ he told *Peter*, that he would *deny* him. Hence are all those admirable predictions in the Scripture, which did prophesie many hundred years before the men were born,

5. He knows all things for the future.



what they would do in time, yea God doth not only know the future absolute actions of men, but the conditionate, what they would do if put in such and such conditions: As God revealed to *David* what the *men of Keilah* would do, if he came down thither; but this must be rightly understood; There is not such a *scientia media*, as the Jesuites and Arminians make, as if God did foresee what man would do, if put in such or such a condition, *viz.* beleeve, or not beleeve, antecedently to any decree of God, and thereupon they make God to predestinate some to salvation upon faith thus foreseen: No, we say such a knowledge cannot be, because the object cannot be *scibile*, or have any truth in it, till Gods decree be to give it some being; but when this is presupposed, then we say, God knoweth what man will do when he is in such an estate, such a temptation; Thus the heart of a man is all open as it were of glasse to God.

6.  
God knows  
our works and  
thoughts better  
then we do.

6. God because of his infinite being, knoweth our works, our thoughts, and our hearts, better then we do our selves. We are more known to him then to our own spirits: Thus the Apostle, 1 John 3.20. *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, for he knoweth all things:* So that if the corruptions and sinfulness we espy in our selves be so great in our own eyes, what are they in Gods most pure eyes? He seeth more pride, more unbelief, more guile and falshood then ever thou couldst discern.

7.  
God beholds  
our hearts and  
works, as a  
Judge.

7. God doth not onely know our hearts and works, by a single, bare beholding of them, but as a judge, giving either approbation or condemnation. Thus God knoweth the way of the righteous, by approbation, to reward it, and the way of the wicked, by condemnation, to punish it: So that this knowledge will produce great effects, either of comfort or terror.

*Use of Admonition,* Doth God thus know all things, all thy sinnes, all thy duties, all thy thoughts and ends? then be thou quickned up to all sincerity in the waies of godliness, what a vain thing will the applause of men, their good words do thee? When God shall say, Depart thou hypocrite into everlasting fire: What a dreadfull thing is it for thee to applaud thy own self, and others to blesse thee; and God to curse

curse thee because of thy unsound and rotten heart? Oh consider that all things are naked and open to that God, whom thou serveſt, to whom thou prayeſt, with whom thou haſt to do; what Sermon, what truth will enter like a ſword into thy bowels, if this do not? Doeſt thou think to put off God, as thou doeſt put off men? will he make no deeper ſearch into all thy waies of wickedneſſe then they do? *Auſtin* ſaid, Many that were dead are praiſed for Saints in heaven, who yet it may be, are roaring as damned miſcreants in hell. Therefore the Apoſtle giveth us a good rule, *Gal. 6.4.* Let every man prove his own work, ſo that he have rejoycing in himſelf, and not in another; Its a weak and unſafe thing, to build all thy hopes of ſalvation upon the good repute others give of thee; though they be Miniſters and godly friends, they know not what is in the bottom of thy heart: Their charity makes them judge well, when it may be God knoweth it is otherwiſe with thee.

*Uſe 2. of Conſolation* to the godly, That mourn under their ſinnes and failings, bewaile their hypocriſie, and tremble under this truth, Though the world be apt to call thee an hypocrite, to miſconſtrue all thou doeſt, to charge all guile upon thee, yet God knoweth all things, he knoweth thy integrity, he ſeeth how much thou hateſt thoſe ſins they blame thee for, Oh its well for the godly that God knoweth them.



## S E R M. XXXIII.

*Of having onely a Name to live, a  
Repute of being Religious without  
any true Life.*

R E V E L. 3. 1.

*I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and  
art dead.*

**V**WE have already declared the arraignment and inditement of the Church of *Sardis*, and the evident conviction of the sinne charged upon her, to be the two main parts of this Epistle. The *Evidence* hath been considered of. We come now to the *Inditement* it self, and that is for such a sinne as cannot be accused in humane Courts, nor is punishable by mans Laws, viz. *Hypocrisie* and *Insincerity* in the duties of Religion; Had all the Neighbour-Churches been called to give in their verdict, they would have passed a clea n contrary censure, and acquitted her with great applause, but *God seeth not, or judgeth as man doth.*

The Bill of the Arraignment runneth thus, *Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.* Life and death are here taken spiritually and mystically. *Life* is for that state of grace, whereby we move and are active in the things of God, *Death* is a state of sinne, whereby we are wholly senselesse either of our misery, or any heavenly remedy, and are unable to move or stirre one foot to heaven, and also are so many noi-  
some



some and unclean carcases before God. Thus we that fear bodily death, when it is *the King of terrors*, ought much rather to tremble at this state of sinne in our selves, and to bewail our Father, Children, Friends in this spiritual dead condition, more then for corporal death: So on the contrary, The life of grace deserveth only the name of life, the godly man only liveth, for he doth both *vivere* and *valere*. Now the Churches disease is a deceitfull consumption, rotten intrals, with a ruddy face, a seeming life, but a real death; flourishing and sprouting branches and leaves, yet a dead root. And that we may take notice what a glorious seeming life of Religion she had, the expression is, *She had a Name that she lived.*

*Name*] in the Scripture is often put for the persons themselves, as *vers. 5.* and *Act. 1. 15.* but this is a meer Hebraism, the Grecians do not use to do so. But

2. It doth not meerly signifie a person, but a person under some glorious fame and great repute, *Numb. 16.* strong men, men of names, *i. e.* famous men. Thus *Job 30. 8.* children of base men, are called men of no name: And thus the Latines usually, *Nullius nominis*, and *Vive tibi, & nomina magna fuge*: So then to have a name, doth denote the great fame and glorious repute this Church had for her piety, yet in the bottom of all there was nothing but emptinesse, they were not perfect or filled works, as *v. 2.*

That a Church or particular person may have a great esteem Observed and repute for piety and holinesse, and yet be inwardly dead and destitute of all grace. They may be pictures without any life, clouds without water, *Sodoms Apples*, fair to see too, but nothing save ashes if ye touch them. We read of *Laodicea*, another Church to whom an Epistle is directed, *She was poor, naked and miserable, when she thought her self rich, full and wanting nothing*, but that it was her own particular deceit and overweening of her self. This Church of *Saras*, not only her self, but others also thought her so, when God knew the contrary.

I shall treat on this not as it belongs to a Church, but as to a particular person, and so it will better advantage our souls,  
let

What goes to  
make a man  
reputed hea-  
venly and reli-  
gious.

I.

Freedom from  
infamous sins.

let us therefore consider first what goeth to make up this Name of an heavenly and religious life, when yet there is nothing but death. And

First, *There must be an innocency and freedom from scandalous or infamous finnes*: For these foggy vapours will quickly darken and becloud the bright lustre of a religious name: The prophane man cannot have a name that he liveth, but his own conscience, and the conscience of all others doth condemn him for a dead man. Therefore such are to be cast out from this society, as we bury the dead that they may not annoy the living: Even as *Origen* telleth us of the *Pythagorians*, who were a strict sect, and kept rigid Discipline amongst themselves; if any amongst them committed a foul offence, they cast him from among them, and sent him a Coffin, as unto a dead man. Now this is the case of many Christians, they have no other name but of wretched and dead men in their finnes, they are noisome carcases all over the place where they live; Let not then these dead flies fall into thy box of ointment, for they will make all unfavoury.

2.

A constant  
performance  
of all religious  
duties,

Secondly, *As there must be freedom from great sins, so there must be a constant performance of all religious duties, and the solemn observance of the Ordinances Christ hath commanded*: For meer negatives are not enough to raise the name of a man for godlinesse: There must be positives also, the not doing good is doing great evil in Christianity; therefore God threatens this Church to come as a thief in the night, that is, terribly and suddenly, not for any prophanenesse or impieties, but meerly for emptinesse and deficiency in holy duties; Its not wilde fruit, but only the good fruit is not ripe enough, as *Matth. 13*. The temporary believer is said, *That he doth not τελεσποιεῖν bring forth fruit to perfection*. There is some fruit, but it is not kindly, it is not ripe. If then God be angry with prayers and duties not filled up with grace, how much more for the total omission and neglect of them? Oh then consider this, and lay it to heart, you cannot so much as have the name of a godly man, unlesse there be a constant performance of all those duties and religious worship which God requireth, *A name indeed thou hast, by thy very Baptism and external*

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external profession, but not such a Name as this Text speaks of, full of glory and repute with others, *If thou art not a diligent comer to Church, frequenter of the Ordinances in publique, a carefull observer of Family-duties in thy own house, thou art not yet come to have so much as a Name.* Thus you see a publick observance of religious duties, both publick and private, are necessary to make the name of a godly man.

But thirdly, *It is not every kinde of religious way, nor all manner of devotion that makes this Name, but it must be in such a manner and way, as God hath commanded.* We reade of some called *devout Jews*, who yet were great opposers of Christs way, *Acts 13.45.* Paul beareth witnesse of the great zeal, the Jews had for the traditions of the Fathers, *Rom. 10.2.* Yea Paul speaks much of his own fervency this way, when he thought he was bound to do so many things against Christ, but did this make him have a name of Religion? No, but a name of the Persecutor of it. This is alwaies to be observed, that the expressions of our piety and worship of God, must be according to what he hath commanded, and therefore are the Israelites so often forbid to walk after the imaginations of thine own hearts, or to walk in the way which they shall chuse of their own head, *In vain do they worship,* saith Christ, *when God hath not required it at their hands,* *Matth. 15.9.* The Jews that were so diligent in their worshipping of Idols; The Pharisee that went up and down to make proselytes; The Papist and heretick that is so industrious to deceive souls and infect others with the plague they themselves have, cannot be said to have a name that they live. Had this Church of *Sardis* been corrupted all over with idolatry and heresie, it could have been no more a living Church, then a leprous person had been clean by the Levitical decrees: We see when *Israel* was thus apostatized from God to Idols, *God gave her a Bill of divorce,* and would own her no more. Piety then and the worship of God lieth not in such devout expressions as every one shall be apt to fancy to himself, but in the rules and directions of Gods Word, otherwise if we will believe the Church of *Rome* upon her own testimony; her great pillars tell us, *She only lives*; true piety is only there; all that

3.

And in such a way as God hath appointed



have departed from her are dead and no Churches. We see therefore that men differ about what is piety, what is true religion, and as one man is an heretick to another, so one an Idolater to another, one Church no Church to another. We must come therefore to the sure Word of God, as they did to *Solomon*, to know which is the live childe, or the dead.

## 4.

The name of Religion is the more famous, by how much the more extraordinary gifts and parts there are.

Fourthly, *This Name of Religion is then more famous and glorious when there are extraordinary parts and gifts, or miraculous operations, then the repute of piety is more easily believed.* As that *Judas* did become a Disciple of Christ and professed faith in him, was nothing so great for his name, as that he prophesied in Christs name, and wrought miracles. This would make his name sound every where. And indeed it is very hard to think where God giveth such gifts of illumination and miraculous operations, that he doth not also bestow the grace of sanctification, but that these two may easily be divided and separated, our Saviour *Matth. 7.* makes it very evident, and *Paul* *1 Cor. 13.*

Signs whereby we gather that a person hath but the Name of being religious, yet is truly dead.

## 1.

They usually rest in this Name.

These things premised, let us consider what are the Signs or discoveries whereby we may gather that a person hath the name of living religiously, but is truly dead.

And first, *They that are thus nominals and not reals, they usually rest in this Name.* They put confidence in this fame and esteem they have, not at all looking any further. The Apostle excellently describeth such an one, *Rom. 2. 17, 18, 19, 20.* He speaketh there of a Jew, who was instructed in the will of God, a guide and light to others, having a form of knowledge, &c. and which was the deadly herb in the pottage, he rested in this, and made boast of it. Its a wonderful thing to see how a man will put confidence in the meer form and bare shape of religion. The Jews generally were destroyed by this sinne, and certainly this is an epidemical disease among Christians, they rest in the form of religion without the power, which is to take the shadow without the substance. In other things men would not content themselves so, what is the form or picture of meat to an hungry stomach? The shape and representation of fire to a cold man? and thus indeed

deed were thy heart sensible of thy spiritual necessities and wants, thou wouldst look to more then the meer external form of any duty, where is the life and power of it? as she said, *Give me children else I die*; so wouldst thou, Lord, give me this life of grace, this power of godlinesse in all my duties, else I am damned: Do thou then weigh all thy religious duties, for God will, and whatsoever is too light, too empty, that hath nothing but custom and a form in it, say, This God will not accept of.

Secondly, Where there is only a *Name* of life, and yet inwardly dead, *There the root and bottom, or spring of religious duties, is wholly withered and dried up.* That as it is said of the Church, *She is glorious within*, so on the contrary here, such are glorious without, and rotten or withered within; what was in the bottom of the Pharisees hearts, notwithstanding their prayers, alms and fastings? nothing but muck and filth, compared therefore to painted sepulchres, fair apples, but rotten at the coar. Now although man cannot search into this, yet God can. He seeth what flowers grow upon thorns, and what grapes upon thistles, hence Christ *Luk 6.45.* makes the good treasure of a man, to be his good and sanctified heart, thy spiritual riches and wealth lieth not in multitude of duties, nor excellency of parts, but in the spiritual goodness of thy heart; and where this is wanting, though there may be some outward glory and hope, for a while, yet wanting a root, a spring, it must necessarily dry up. Oh then consider whether thy heart be not a barren wilderness, thy soul be not like the mountains of *Gilboa*, that have no dew on them! Pray thou doest, hear thou doest, acknowledge thou doest thy self to be a Christian, but thy inwards are altogether rottenness. Are not thy duties like those herbs that grow in a dry wall, though they bud and blossome, yet there is no root for them. I tell you the marrow and very essence lieth in this, to have a root, a spring within: Every thing may be painted, but life: The shape and lineaments of body, these may be represented to your eye, but life and motion Art cannot imitate. The hypocrite he can go as farre as the outward duty, but then the vital acts, and inward motions

2.  
The root and spring of religious duties is dried up.

of grace, those he cannot attain unto: Oh then that our hearers were wise to understand these things! Have I any more then a form upon me, while the Word is preached? Hath God ever yet breathed the spiritual life of grace in my soul? Am I not a very dead wretch for all my duties, profession to this very day? Oh it is to be feared that this is the case of many! All within is corrupt and senseless, how glorious soever outwardly. When God promised temporal mercies concerning *Ishmael*, *Oh that Ishmael might live*, saith *Abraham*, as if all outward mercies were nothing, unlesse he had Gods favour also.

3.  
They onely attend to keep up this Name.

Thirdly, *Men of a name for piety, without the true power of it, they only attend to keep up this Name.* All their endeavour is to support this repute and esteem, not at all aiming at, and living to him: They take up *Machiavels* wicked counsell, *The opinion and repute of vertue is necessary and advantageous, but the reality of it is a burden.* No great thing can be done, no honour can be attained without the repute and form of religion: Therefore those who abhorre the life of it, make use of the name of it. Now how farre was the Apostle *Paul* from such a temper? *1 Thess. 2. 3, 4.* He did not seek glory of men, but did so discharge his trust, not as pleasing men, but God which trieth the hearts; Therefore if the Gospel did flourish, and the souls of men were edified, though he were accounted as a cast-away, he mattered it not: Oh then be afraid of thy self, when thou art onely carefull to keep up thy Name, thy Glory, but doest not regard the glory of God; thou mindest more the applause of men, and their good words, then the testimony of a good conscience before God. This vain-glory is a worm or caterpillar that will quickly devour all that seeming fruit which groweth upon thee.

4.  
They have no true joy or delight in their approaches to God.

Fourthly, *Where there is nothing but a Name of life, there is inwardly no delight and true joy in our heavenly approaches to God.* There is no communion or fellowship with God in these duties, you may perceive by many of *Dauids* Psalms, what happiness and joy he found in the Ordinances, which made him long for them, *as the Hart after the water brooks*; This could not



not have been if *David* had been devoid of spiritual life: You see a dead man can take no delight in eating or drinking, no joy in the company of those that were his dearest friends; and thus men spiritually dead in sinne, though they pray, they hear, they have family duties, yet they have no true delight in these things, they have no spiritual communion with God in the use of them. Oh consider this particular, for nothing will sooner discover whether thou art alive or dead, then this particular in all Ordinances & holy duties dost thou by faith have communion with God? Is thy heart and affections ascending to him? Are his gracious influences descending upon thee? then here is life in thee, for all these religious duties they are an heavenly commerce with God, though we do not as *Moses* speak face to face to God, as one friend to another, yet by faith in a spiritual manner the soul doth there enjoy God, and receiveth of his favours, so that all those duties are dead duties, and those Ordinances are dead Ordinances, when God and the soul have not this spiritual intercourse. But where is the Auditor to whom this is not a riddle? Is not this a mystery unto most men? They draw not nigh to God, they are not believing in, or enjoying of God in their duties; its not God that they immediately close with; Its not Christ apprehended by faith, that their souls do imbrace in these times.

Fifthly, Where there is onely a *Name* of life in duties, *There is no spiritual effect obtained by the daily exercise of them.* But they are still the same persons, their lives are still the same. Now this could not be, if our religious duties were performed with lively principles, for consider the glorious ends why Christ hath appointed praying, hearing, and all his other Ordinances in the Church, they are to beget and increase the life of grace in us, they are to make us grow and bring forth more fruit. But this dead formalist is alwaies at the same stand, his graces do not flourish more, he is not carried on to further perfection, but as he was ten or twenty years ago, he is still the same. Oh Beloved, this argueth we want real life in our profession, for Christ would draw nigh in these dispensations, he would blesse our store, and make our five talents to increase to ten. We should finde ver-

5.

There is no spiritual effect of duties to such men.

true coming from God into our souls by these duties, as she did from Christ, by touching his garment.

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In such there  
is no stedfast-  
nesse.

Sixthly, Where there is only a *Name* of life and no more, *Vox & preterea nihil*, as he said of the Nightingal, *Jacobs* cloathes but *Esaus*'s body, *There can be no stability or stedfastnesse in the day of violent temptations*; and we may observe that our Saviour did greatly presse this upon his Disciples, to make them such as could abide all tempests; To this purpose *Luke 6.* is that Parable of the foolish and wise builder, as also *Matth. 13.* of the thorny ground that for a while did flourish, till the scorching Sunne arose, and why was all this Apostasie? because they had no root, they did not dig deep enough to build on a rock; where therefore there is no true life of grace within, all duties and every profession will vanish, like the land-flood it will quickly dry up for want of a spring. Take away the formal and carnal respects that moved him to religious duties, and then you take away the pillar of his building; put this rush from the mire, and it will not grow.

Lastly, Where there is only a *Name* of life, and not life it self, *There all the duties of religion are by the by, the accessory, the lesse principal, but earthly contents and delights are the main and principal.* Those in *Amos 8.5.* that did keep up the solemn duties God required, did them only for fashion sake, to keep up a name, for their hearts were not in them, they asked when the *new moons and Sabbaths would be over*, that they might to their earthly employments; And if there were nothing but this, we might sadly complain, that there is nothing but the name of Christianity and religion every where, for who makes godlinesse his main businesse and employment, who can say with *Paul, Gal. 3.* *I no longer live, but Christ in him*: Oh strive to write after this copie, take *Paul* for an example, *Not I but Christ liveth in me*, why doth that proud self, that worldly self, that carnal self live in thee?

*Use.* Of Examination, Let it come to the touch stone and trial, be willing to drink down this jealousie-water, go and weigh your persons, your duties, your profession in the balance

lance of the Sanctuary; Oh be afraid lest such formality, deadnesse, and dullnesse that is in thee, make thee not appear too light, and so God refuse thee; Oh that God would perswade you to be faithful in making a diligent search; how many dead corps will there be in every family more then amongst the *Egyptians*? and yet for one dead person, what crying and complaining was there? Would not *Rachel* give over weeping because of her dead children? Why wilt thou then cease mourning for such Friends as are spiritually dead?



# S E R M. XXXIV.

*The great Sinfulness and Danger of having but a Name to live.*

R E V. 3. I.

*I know thy works, that thou hast a Name that thou livest, and art dead.*

**T**He last day we discovered the properties of such who had a name only in Religion but were dead: In the next place I shall aggravate the sinfulness of such an estate, and shew the vanity and insufficiency of it, though most men rest in that alone; and first *A name without the reality of spiritual life is very absurd and ridiculous. Nomen* is of *nosco*, that whereby we know what a thing is; As *Abigail* said of *Nabal*, 1 Sam. 25. 25. *As is his Name so is he*; Folly is with him, as his Name signifieth: It's *Aristotles* rule from the names

The sinfulness of having only a name to live.

I.

It is absurd & ridiculous.



names of things, we must come to make the definition of their natures: Its one argument that our Divines use against the Socinians, who hold *Adam* was created a very simple innocent man, even like an Infant; that he was indued with full knowledge and wisdom, because God brought all the creatures to him, and he gave them names which proveth that he knew all their natures; so then the name and the nature should agree, if thou art called a beleever, thou shouldst live the life of faith; if thou art named a Saint, thou shouldst live as one that is holy to the Lord; If thou art called a Christian thou shouldst have that spirituall anointment of all graces upon thee, otherwise thou art a Christian by an *Antiphrase*, *quasi* no Christian, as they say *bellum quia minime bellum*, or as in the Hebrew, an whore is called a sanctified or holy one, in a clean contrary sense: Consider then, how absurd a thing it is for thee to have the name of a beleever, who livest as an Athiest, Thou speakest, thou dost as if the Scripture were not true, as if the promises were not faithfull, or the threatnings sure; God sometimes changed names, but then he made a reall change also: Thus *Abraham* and *Sarah*, so *Peter* was called *Cephus*: If it be thus with thee, that since thou hast these glorious Names, thou hast had also a mighty change in thy conversation; this is good and comfortable: Its noted as a ridiculous imitation in the Popes who upon their creation take new names: *Clemens* and *Urbanus* such pleasing titles, be they never so cruell and oppressive of the truth, That Incendiary of the whole world would be called *Bonifacius*, though he was one of the worst *Malefacias*'s that ever lived: Oh then let this make thee ashamed, out of thy impiety and wickednesse say, What an absurd, foolish thing is it, that I should take those solemn and even dreadfull titles of a Beleever, a Christian upon me, and yet live like a Beast or a devil?

2. Its a direct breach of the third Commandment, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*, for which there is that severe commination, *God will not hold them guiltlesse that do so*. To take Gods Name in vain is not only by perjury and by that ordinary cursing and swearing amongst men, but

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every thing by which God is made known to us, is Gods Name: Thus his Ordinances, his worship, his truth, these are his Name, and we take them in vain when we only keep up the externall form of them, not putting forth the life and power of them, Thus the Jews and all such Gentiles as come into the outward profession of Gods truth and worship, his name is said to be called upon by them, so that an empty dead Christian is a sinner in an higher manner then at first we would think: These Titles are sacred and religious, They are Gods Name, and for thee to use it idly and vainly, provoketh God, and he will not hold thee guiltlesse: Oh how little do these dead formall Christians think to finde themselves out in the number of perjured and prophane cursers at the last day? Those would upon every occasion take the name of God in their mouths, and assume it, to witnesse a lie, and thus dost thou continually by having the name of Religion, but being destitute of the reall power of it.

3, *Where there is only name and no inward life, there is a reall and plain denying of God, renouncing of God, Tit.1.16, They* <sup>3.</sup> *professe they know God, but in works they deny him: God* <sup>It's a denying of God.</sup> *doth not matter thy profession, thy religious worship, when he seeth thy works to the contrary: In the Civill Law, it's a rule, Non valet protestatio contra factum, much lesse will thy bare protestation prevail against thy works, Isa.1. Those Jews that did so much abound in externall worship, that they even wearied God, God professeth his great hatred and abomination of them: The killing of a Sacrifice was as abominable as to cut off a dogs head, and why so? They did not wash them, or make them clean; and therefore he calls them not Jews, as they were by profession, but Princes of Sodom and Gomorrha, as they were by reall wicked actions, and thus the Apostle Rom.2. saith that Circumcision is made uncircumcision to him that obeyeth not the Law: I tell thee thy prophaness, thy lukewarmnesse makes thee as if thou wert no Christian, makes thee as it were an heathen and a stranger to the Common-wealth of Israel. Did Christ look upon it otherwise then a mockery and a reall renouncing of them, when they put a crown upon his head, and said, Hail, King of the*

*Jews?* for by their actions they crucified him, though by their words they seemed to honour him.

4.  
It's a great reproach and dishonour to God.

4. *A name without life is a great reproach and dishonour to God*; for hereby the name of God is blasphemed, and his truth derided, when mens lives are so contrary to their names. *Rom. 2.* The ungodly Jew made *the Name of God to be blasphemed amongst the Gentiles*; What unworthy and shameful things any servants do, it redounds to the reproach of their Master; Now all men by their Christian profession acknowledge Christ their Lord and Master: if therefore such do wickedly, Christ is immediately dishonoured by them, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. 2. 19.* *Naomi* would not have her own name, because her condition was so contrary to it, *Call me no more Naomi, but Marah*, saith she, so maist thou say, Call me not a Beleever, a Christian, for i have not the life of truth, but rather I am unfavoury salt, I am a spot and a blemish to Christ and the Church wherein I live. The honour then and glory of God should be a great motive with thee; How can I do this and blaspheme that holy Name wherewith I am called? This made *Ambrose* say, *Nomen inane was crimen immane*, an empty name was an horrid crime, because God is hereby reproached as if he countenanced and allowed such followers,

5.  
It's a vain thing.

5. Its a vain thing, *for it cannot hide thee from the wrath of God*; He seeth through thy name into thy nature and life, God is not like *old Isaac* that takes *Jacob* for *Esau* because of his counterfeit garments; But as *Jeroboams Wife*, though she had disguised her self, yet as soon as the Prophet heard her feet at the threshold, he said, *Come in thou Wife of Jeroboam*; so can God much rather say, *Come in thou hypocrite, Come in thou worldling, thou proud man, though thou disguisest thy self by names and pretences, Do not then think of thy self as commended by this the more unto God*: And as it is a vain thing in respect of God, so it is also as to thy comfort and good: The bare name of Christianity doth not give thee any soul-saying benefits; It brings not pardon of sinne or interst into the Kingdom of Glory, no more then the name of

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of meat will feed an hungry man, or the name of rayment cloathe a naked man. Therefore the Apostle in that Epistle to James cap. 2. doth on purpose set himself to shew the insufficiency of titular faith, if it be not accompanied with an holy life, it is a *dead faith*, and the man is a *vain man*. What wilt thou do then, O thou deciver of thy own soul, in the day of death and Gods wrath will this bare name be proved sufficient to keep off the scorching heat of the Sunne? Will this administer any true peace and solid joy to thee? What if men call thee rich, when thou art extremely poor? What if they call thee sound and well, when thou art pained with exquisite torments? and what if others do praise thee, call thee a good man, a religious man, when thy conscience may condemn thee for a dead wretch? If then a name and nothing else be accounted a vain thing in other matters, why not especially in Religion which is wholly practical?

6. *The excellent promises and priviledges of Religion are not made to names and titles, but realities*; We reade in Scripture of great and glorious things promised, justification of our persons, adoption, boldnesse with God, assurance at the Throne of Grace, and an happy enjoyment of God for ever: Now who are they whom God will thus honour? Those that have a name and title only? no, but there must be the reall qualifications and conditions which God requireth, *Isa. 44. 3, 4, 5.* We have there an excellent promise of the Name and nature together; What refreshments and spirituall waterings they shall have that take Gods Name upon them, *I will pour water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground*: Here a man unsanctified is compared to a dry ground and a wilderness, and the grace of God to precious streams and floods poured out upon it, and they shall not only have the life of grace, but they shall flourish and grow as willows by the water-courses: Thus God will sanctifie their inwards and blesse their outwards, and when thus qualified, then one shall say *I am the Lords*, and another shall call himself by the Name of *Jacob*, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the Name of *Israel*: See here what kinde of

6.

The excellent promises are not made to it.

persons those should be that call on Gods Name, and give themselves up to him, persons powerfully and plentifully wrought upon by the holy Spirit of God, who of a wilderness are become a pleasant paradise: We reade that the Church sometimes useth this argument, why God should more especially protect her, and shew mercy to her, even because she calls on his name, *Jer. 14. 9. Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou O Lord art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name: and Jer. 10. 25. The Prophet thinketh this argument enough to pour out his wrath upon the heathen, because they call not on Gods Name.* But when a people have rebelled against God, and walked contrary to him, then this argument will not prevail till there be repentance and reformation, as appeareth by Gods dealing with the people of *Israel*; so then consider with thy self; To whom do those promises belong of grace and salvation? who are they that have the Lord for their portion and salvation? Even such as with the name have the power also of Christianity. Therefore besides this open known Name of a Christian or Believer, we reade of a new secret Name which none knew but he that hath it; and this is promised to him that overcometh, to him that is reall and powerfull in the waies of God, *Rom. 2. 7.* Oh then consider whether thou hast this new Name in a white stone, it's an allusion they say to the custome of Heathens, who used to acquit a man accused by a white stone, and writing his Name therein: so that this is a glorious promise of an excellent Name, viz. to be the Sons of God in deed and in power, and such knowledge they shall have of this, that they themselves shall be certain of it, although they cannot expresse it to another: They cannot reveal it to another, because of the unspeakable sweetnesse and delight they feel among themselves: As a man that tasteth and eateth honey can never expresse it by words so to another that knoweth it not, that he shall be able to perceive it. Thus we have also an excellent promise made, *Isa. 65. 5.* To the godly Jews called *Eunuchs*, because of their separation into a strange Land, and so without any hope of a posterity after thme, *I will give them a better Name then of*

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Sons and Daughters, and that was to be Gods Sons and Daughters; so that howsoever there be great names full of glory in the world, and comfortable names, as of father and children, yet if we have the power as well as the title of our Christian names, they are more excellent and joyfull then all these, How should this provoke you to have life it self as well as the name of it, because to it only these glorious things do belong?

7. *This Name to live without life it self, will bring a greater curse, and doth expose us to a greater condemnation then those who never knew this Name of God or called on it.* There is nothing more ordinary then out of Scripture to hear, that even heathens, yea, the worst of Heathens, the Sodomites, shall be lesse punished then the Jew who yet had the only name of Gods people in the whole world; Oh this very Name, this very Title will cost thee dear: In *Valens* the Emperours time, an Oracle was bruited abroad, that one whose Name did begin with *Theod* should be Emperour, which made all those of quality whose Name did begin so, *Theodorus*, or *Theodosius*, or *Theodulus*, to be put to death, a meer Name cost them so dear. Hath it not been made treason by the Laws of many Nations, to counterfeit the name, and pretend to be such persons to whom the supream power doth belong, when indeed they were counterfeits? Hath not such names and titles cost them dear? How then will God let it go unpunished, when thou shalt assume his name and profession upon thee, pretend to be his Son and Disciple, yet be discovered to be a meer counterfeit? The greater torments in hell are prepared for wicked Christians, Heathens and Pagans receive a lesser condemnation; Know, that as his Name hath exalted thee above others, so it makes thy wickednesse greater, and thy judgements will depreesse thee lower: Be then afraid rather then boast of that holy name whereby thou art called; Say, what a conviction and condemnation will this be to me at the day of judgements? If I would not by my life obey his commands, why did I take that Name upon me? If I would not conform to his precepts, why would I be accounted of his family? Out of thy own mouth God will condemn thee.

7. It exposeth a man to greater condemnation then those who never knew the name of God.



8.

It doth a world  
of hurt to o-  
ther men.

8. *This Name of living without life it self, doth not only dishonour God, destroy thy self, but also doth a world of hurt to others:* It makes them rest contented with such forms and titles; They think there is no more to be done then to be baptized, and to professe we beleeve in Christ, let our conversation be never so prophane and wicked; The Pharisees by that name and title, drew thousand of proselytes into hell with themselves: There is no open enemy can do so much hurt to the way of godlinesse, as a formal, empty Christian, who walketh plausibly in the outward form of piety, but is negligent of the lively exercise thereof: This man makes all his family, all his acquaintance such painted Sepulchres, such glorious pictures; He keeps them all in dead duties and a dead Religion, they thinking it not manners or wisdom to be more fervent and zealous then such an one of so great a Name,

Cautions.

Now to these aggravations I shall subjoyn some few Cautions: As

I.

First, *A good name in Religion is to be maintained and kept up, as Solomen Pro. 22. 1. preferreth it above riches and gold, and the excellency or use of this appeareth by Satan and his instruments, who have alwaies laboured to besmear the godly with ill names, hoping thereby to make the godly more odious; Thus the Christians were of old called ὀπισθεῖται, as if they were Swine wallowing in the mire, and some think they were called calicula, as if they worshipped the heavens and the clouds, because they had no Images or Idols: Our Saviour was traduced in his name as an impostor, as one that had compact with the devils; Thus a good name is to be desired, and to be kept up.*

II.

But Secondly, This is not to be done for vain-glory and the applause of men; but that hereby the Gospel of God may be honoured, and others encouraged to come in to Christ. Trajan the Emperour out of vain-glory would have his Name set up in every building: Therefore Constantine the Great called him *Herba parietaria*, the wall-gillyflower, because his name was in every Wall: And Tully observed it as a vain-glorious act of those that wrote Books *De contemnuenda gloria*, yet

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yet they would subscribe their names to be known: This ambition is ridiculous, but to keep up a good name and a glorious repute, that thereby godlinesse may be honoured, and others won to love the truth, is that which our Saviour expressly commands, when he saith, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may glorifie God, Mat. 5. 16.*

Yea Thirdly, *Its not only lawfull thus to have a name, and to keep up the externall profession of faith in Christ, but it is a duty.* No man may think it enough to keep a good heart, though they make no expression of this, for *Rom. 10. With the heart man beleeveeth, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation;* and this rebuketh two sorts of men: Some there are, that though their expressions are never so wicked, their lives never so foul, yet they say, their hearts are as good as any others, whereas *out of the evil treasure of the heart, cannot but come evil things.* Some again, and those godly, have been in such temptations, as not to speak or conferre of any good thing before others, lest they should be judged hypocrites: The devil hath for a while seduced some tender weak Christians, that they are unwilling to pray, to come to any Ordinances for fear of hypocrisie: But resist this temptation by faith, and never omit any duty for whatsoever Satan shall suggest to them.

III.

*Use.*

*Use of Exhortation,* To make an happy agreement between your names and your lives; your name is Christian, let your life be so; your title is a Beleever, let your actions be full of this faith: Who would not be intraged, if any should say thou art no Christian, no Beleever, and yet thy prophane life manifests it to all the world? As Paul doth allude to *Onesimus* his name, who before had wronged his master, but upon his repentance Paul desires *Philemon* to receive him again, assuring him now he will be *ὀνησιμος* indeed profitable to him, his name and actions will agree: Thus do thou, Lord if my former Heathenish and Paganish life may be forgiven, I will now be a Beleever indeed, a Saint indeed: Its your prophaneesse that gives men occasion to dispute whether our particular Churches be Churches indeed: What, say they, can such be Saints, who are drunkards,

kards, swearers? then you may call white black, and black white; and all that can be answered is, That such are burdens, they are spots and blemishes; we pray that such old leaven may be cast out, that we may be a new lump. Well, if thou art free from this grosse wickednesse, take heed of secret hypocrisie, that thou art not dead in the root, that humane respects be not all the oyl that makes the Lamp of thy profession to burn; for they did not only build *Babel*, to get themselves a name, but some may build *Jerusalem* also meerly to have a name; but God seeth into the heart, and knoweth the root of all thy waies: Therefore remember you have to do with an All-seeing God, not a partiall man.



## S E R M. XXXV.

*The Arraignment of Formality :  
Shewing, that all Unregenerated  
men and their duties are Spiritually  
dead; and that most men are in that  
estate.*

R E V E L. 3.1.

*Thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead.*

**W**E proceed to raise a third Doctrine from the sinne that the Church of *Sardis* is charged with; and that is,

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That it is not enough to keep up the observance of holy and religious duties, unlesse they come from a spiritual life within. And thou art dead (saith Christ) There may be a dead Religion, a dead form of piety; so that as the body without a soul, though you should put glorious raiments on it, were only cadaver, a meer carcase; so it is here, Though a man should have the tongue of men and Angels in holy duties, yet if the heart be dead, and destitute of the life of grace, they are not at all accounted of by God. As Christ himself is said to be life, so he giveth a spiritual life to all his members, John 6.33. In so much that whatsoever duties, or holy actions come not from this inward life, they cannot be accepted of by God, no more then men can love or embrace their dead friends; so that we are now upon the essentials of godlinesse; This is the *τὸ ἐξ ὧν* in Religion; whether thy duties, thy praying and hearing come from a fountain of life within thee; whether thou art a cistern or a spring; whether it may be said of thee, as the Father did of his prodigall, *This our son was dead but is alive*, I was a dead man, in all my duties, my Religion and piety was a dead Religion, my faith and repentance were dead, but now God hath made me alive to righteousness.

To set this truth before you, consider First, *That the Scripture delights to set forth the state of an unregenerate man, destitute of the converting grace of God, under the expression of death, they are judged so many dead men, Mat. 8.22. Let the dead bury the dead. Ephes. 2.1. Dead in trespasses and sinnes. 1 Tim. 5.6. She is dead while she liveth.* Now this phrase is very comprehensive, and is used by the holy ghost for many reasons: As

1. *Death is a deprivation of all sense and feeling; They cannot any more perform any virall operation.* Should all the mountains in the world be laid on a dead man, or all the exquisite torments that can be invented, applied to his body, it will not make him give one groan or cry, he is dead and hath no feeling: Thus it is with every man destitute of Gods grace, he is not in the least manner sensible of his sinne, the danger and burden of it. But though he read the Scripture,

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hear

Observ.

I.  
God sets out the estate of unregeneracy under the expression of death.

I.  
Because death is a deprivation of sense and feeling.

hear the word preached, and that about those very particular sinnes he liveth in, yet he is like an Idol that hath eyes and seeth not, ears and hear not: Every auditory is a *Golgotha*, a place of dead mens skulls, as it were; and they are like *Ezekiels dry bones*, till God breath life into them; were it possible that men should hear and know so much, yet runne into all excess of riot, but that they are so many dead corpses, know not, feel not the burden upon them. Wonder not then, to see men in the same wretched and senselesse estate they were once in; for till God speak as he did to *Lazarus*, Come out of the grave and live, they apprehend nothing at all. Therefore as it is to be shewed, no duties have life in them, which are not accompanied with a spiritual sense and feeling of our own wants, and of the excellency and fulnesse in Christ. Thousands of duties which thou puttest so much confidence in, are as the Scriptures expression is, nothing but the *head of a dead dog*, a most contemptible and abominable thing, till there be the life of grace.

2.  
Because of the dissolution of the union between the soul and God.

2. As the state of sin is death, because of the senselesse of it, so also because of the dissolution of that union the soul had with God, in its creation. Death is the dissolution of that union the soul and body had, and so this spirituall death separates the soul from God; in so much that they are said, *Ephes. 3.* to be *without God, and alienated from the life of God*. They are without Christ, and so as branches separated from the Vine, cannot flourish, or bring forth fruit: God is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body: Thus then all men are dead, who are not united to Christ by his Spirit, and therefore let thy duties and Religion be never so famous in the world, if it come not from the Spirit of Christ in thee, uniting thee to him, they are dead and unprofitable duties. Thus *Rom. 8. 10.* *The Spirit is life because of righteousness*: & *v. 2.* *sanctification is called the law of the spirit of life*, as some learned men expound it. As long then as thy soul is thus divided from Christ, having no union or communion with him, thou art in the state of dead men, and all thy Religion is a dead Religion: It must be the Spirit of God, that giveth life to thee.

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3. The Scripture calls this a state of death, *because of the spirituall uncleannesse and defilement that is upon us*, being impure, and making every thing impure: We see in the Leviticall rites, that if a man touched a dead man, or a bone of a dead man, or the grave only, he was unclean seven daies, *Numb. 19.16.* Now this typicall uncleannesse, doth denote spirituall uncleannesse; and that is part, though not all the reason why sinnes are called dead works, *Heb. 9.14.* because he there speaks of being purified from them, by an allusion to the Jewish sprinkling of those that were unclean, *ver. 13.* so then the Scripture calls thy unregenerate estate, *death*, to shew thy uncleannesse, thy defilement, that thou shouldst be as loathsome and abominable to thy self, as a dead carcass is to thee, that thy very duties and religious performances should be utterly distastfull to thee: and certainly if the Church looketh upon her righteousness, though sanctified, as menstruous rags, with what loathing shouldst thou behold all thy holy duties done in a state of enmity against God? Oh the vast difference between thy thoughts and Gods, concerning thy holy duties! That which thou callest holinesse he despiseth as a dead carcasse, so that thou shouldst even remove these out of his sight, as thou wouldst thy sins, even to fear God should behold thy praying, and hearing, because of that spirituall uncleannesse upon thee, as well as cursing and swearing, thou comest to the feast, not having a wedding garment.

3. Because of the spirituall uncleannesse and defilement that is upon us

4. This expression of death, doth also denote *what terror and amazement the state of sinne should strike into every one.* If corporall death be called *the King of terrors*, how much rather spirituall? Art thou afraid to dye, why not then to be kept in the bonds of this spirituall death? If the Physician tell the diseased patient, he is a dead man, all the world cannot help him, what fear and trembling doth this beget? Now though the messenger of God, tell the unconverted man lying under the power of sinne, that he is a dead man, even a damned man, in respect of Gods curse, till repealed upon repentance, he is not moved at all: Oh then be awakened upon this truth, Am I not dead in my sinne? Can I be in a

4. It denotes what horror the state of sin should strike into every one.



more wretched and terrible estate then I am? If I were to be carried to the grave, all my friends weeping over the hearse, its not so miserable as now it is with me; may not all godly friends mourn over me, as a dead man? How long shall we hear these things, and yet be as dead men? Do thou flatter and applaud thy self, yet remember thou art in the terrible estate of a spirituall dead and miserable man.

5.  
Because unregenerated men cannot perform any vital actions.

5. They that are in a state unregenerated may well be called dead, *because they cannot perform any vitall actions.* They cannot understand spirituall things, they cannot love, will, or imbrace them: But as *Aristotle* saith, A dead eye, or dead hand, is an equivocall eye or hand, it hath only the name, but not the operation of those faculties: Thus it is with all unconverted men, They are believers, they pray, hear, repent equivocally, they have the name of these things, but not the proper operation; they do not understand, believe, delight or rejoyce in holy things, and indeed this is properly to perform holy duties, without a principle of supernaturall life, when there are not those divine workings and operations of the heart in them; The minde is not spiritually enlightened, the will is not sanctified, the affections not mortified, and the whole indued with principles from above. Come we then to the marrow of all godlinesse, see with what hearty principles of life all thy duties are accomplished; Is life in thy minde, in thy will, in thy affections? then God smells a sweet savour in all thy duties, otherwise thy duties are but as so many flowers cut from the root, that presently wither and lose all their sweetnesse: Give me then a Christian, that besides meer praying, hearing, coming to Church, doth spiritually understand and powerfully will and imbrace heavenly things, that he be not a golden image that hath no life within.

6.  
Because such have no communion with God or the Saints.

6. The Scripture calls this a dead estate, *because there is no communion or fellowship with God or the Saints.* For as the dead do no more converie with the living: Therefore *He-man* describing his solitary condition, saith, he was as a dead man, as one forgotten. The dead and the living can have no society or communion together: Therefore the godly are said,

said, 1 *Pet.* 2.5. to be *lively stones built up to a spirituall house*: if we speak of God, alas, the unregenerate man, though he pray, he hear, yet he hath no communion with God, because dead in his sinne: As *Hezekiab* in another case said, *The living, the living he shall praise thee*; so it is here, *The living, the living, he shall pray to thee, he shall hear the Word preached to advantage*. Or as in the matter of the resurrection, God is said to be *the God of the living, and not of the dead*, its true of the spiritually dead, as well as the corporall; God is not worshipped, served, or loved by them, but they are strangers to God and know him not, even while they draw nigh to him, and call on his Name: And as he is not in communion with God, so neither in communion with the Saints, but as dead members in the whole body, or withered branches in the tree; so are they in the Church of God; he doth not quicken up others, or is quickened by others; he doth neither impart good, or receive good, but is a dead tree in Paradise, whereas every godly man is a tree of life therein, living in himself, and instrumentally making others to live.

Lastly, Unregenerate men are said to be dead, *because of their utter impotency and inability to do any good action*. Can *Lazarus* raise up himself from the grave? no more can we from sin; we are not only said to be blinde or deaf, but even dead, that so all may be given to the power and grace of God. The *Arminian* and *Pelagian*, even all that are enemies to grace under the praise of nature, they love not to hear of this expression, they think if rigidly urged, it overthroweth their sandy foundations: therefore they will make it a partiall death, or no death, and severall waies wrest and subvert the text: but if God be the sole author of our naturall life, can we be the authors of supernaturall life? We that could not make our selves men, which is the lesse, shall we make our selves holy men? which is the greater: We that cannot make a fly or worm, shall we cause grace? For the making of a man godly is a creation, and greater then the creation of the whole world, as *Austin* expressed it: So that this very expression may fill us with great confusion, we

7.  
Because of  
their utter im-  
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should lye on the dust, and bewail our soars, our impotency to any duty. *John 15.* our Saviour doth excellently pursue this truth, *That without him we can do nothing*, no more then the *branch without the vine*: No more then *Adams* body, which was a lump of earth, could move or stirre till God breathed life into him, and made him a living soul. But you will say, If the dead can do no good thing, How comes it about that this Church could have a name, she did pray, she kept up the externall observation of all Gods worship, therefore certainly some good thing she did. To this the answer is easie, That there is a twofold good work, *bonum internum*, which is essentially good; as to believe, to repent, to love God; and *bonum externum*, an outward good work, such as to hear, to pray, to come to Church, these duties may be outwardly done, by the power of nature; but the first sort cannot, and even these later, though they may be done, yet they cannot be done well, in a right or holy manner; they pray, but not well; they hear, but not in a right manner: and thus it is no wonder, if men, though dead in sinne, may yet do those outward actions, which for the nature of them are good, but not in a godly manner. And this is the first thing considerable.

## II.

The Scripture  
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like distinction  
of graces.  
There is a  
dead faith.

Secondly, The Scripture doth not only say mens persons are dead, thus distinguishing of living men and dead men, *but it also makes such a distinction of graces*; it tells us of a *dead faith* and a *living faith*; not that a dead faith is a grace, or faith indeed, but because it appeareth so; as the spirit which appeared is called *Samuel*, because it came up like him: Or as the *Angels* did eat sometimes when they appeared, which could not be a vitall action, for an Angel was only a form assisting, not informing the bodies they assumed. The Apostle *James*, cap. 2. tells us several times of a *dead faith*, and makes it that which is not accompanied with all the good works that God requireth; so by this, we may as well say, there is a dead Christianity, a dead baptism, a dead Religion, when with these we do not see sanctified and reformed lives. So *Act. 11. 18.* Thus we reade of a *repentance unto life*, which doth suppose a dead repentance, such as *Ahab* had, *Judas* had,

A dead repentance.

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had, they repented, but it was not to life: Even as *Anstin* called the persecutions that the Heretiques, *Arius* or others sustained for their heresies, *Steriles persecutiones*, barren persecutions, because they did make up the carnall glory, they did not bring any heavenly advantage: Thus this is a dead and barren repentance. Again the Scripture, 1 *Pet.* 1.3. tels us of a *lively hope*, whereby we may gather there is a *dead hope*: So that there is no true living grace, but the appearance and similitude of it may be called a dead one. You see then there is a dead faith, a dead hope, a dead repentance, and therefore it behoveth every one with the more care to consider of it. As they did before *Solomon*, *strive* about the *dead childe* and the living, no lesse do thou in prayer to God, that the live childe may be given to thee.

A dead hope.

Thirdly, *This dead Religion and dead duties is the estate that almost all live*, except those few whom God hath indowed with a spiritual life, and vouchsafed great zeal and fervency unto; the most part of Christians have a meer dead profession; our Congregations may be called *Aceldamaes*, the Church-yard and the Church both alike; one is full of the corporally dead, the other of spiritual dead: What dead praying, publique and private? what dead hearing? in all these is not thy heart like *Nabals*, a very stone within? The Hebrew expression for the water of a spring, is to call it *living water*, whereas the water of pools and ponds, having no motion, are *dead waters*: Where a people have not a fountain of grace springing up within them, they are dead and destitute of Christ; they are the *mare mortuum*, the dead sea; there are not those zealous and fervent motions of the soul to God: Oh take heed of dying corporally in this spirituall death! all thy Religion, thy duties, will be dead things to thee, of no use or power, as vain as to cry to dead men to help thee.

### III.

This dead Religion and dead duties, is the estate that almost all live in

Fourthly, *Even the people of God, though they have an inward life of grace within them, yet through negligence and carelesnesse, may be dead as to their own sense, and the judgement of others.* As the tree in winter outwardly seemeth dead, but there is a secret root under ground, that keeps in life, Thus it is here, outwardly

### IV.

wardly it may seem as if all their graces were withered, they have not the sense, the quicknesse, the joy, the delight, the communion with God, that once they had. As *Sarahs* womb was called a *dead womb*, so their hearts are *dead hearts*, they bring forth no fruit: As life is either taken *pro actu primo*, the fountain or root of life, or *pro actu secundo*, the motions and expressions of life; now as some diseases, the lethargy and the like, make men dead in the second sense, but not in the first: Thus it is with the godly, if you take life for the actual motions and expressions of it, they are exceeding dead, you can hardly perceive any breathing in them, only this is a root under ground, and God in due time, he will quicken them, but when this deadnesse and senselesnesse is complained of, then there is an expression of life. As *David*. Psal. 115. prayeth God would quicken him often. So that there is a partiall and gradual deadnesse, which the people of God do often labour under, but this is not the deadnesse in the text.

Use.

*Use of Admonition*, Let us look all to this truth, whether our Religion and duties come not from a dead heart, whether thou art not dead at root, for all the leaves that are upon thee: If there be any truth that we would wish you to think of evening and morning, to meditate on eating and drinking, it should be this, Am not I dead in the root all this while? Blame not the Ministry, or thy earthly employments, but thy own heart. *Si rivus deficit, culpa est non alveis sed fontis*; If the stream dry up, the fault is not in the channell but in the spring. If thy duties, thy performances be barren, dry and empty, its because there is not a spring in thy heart: Why art thou so afraid of corporall death, and fearest not this, which only deserveth the name of death? Oh the number of dead men that are every where. Those that lye buried in their graves are not more devoid of naturall life, then most men are of spirituall life. As therefore they were so sollicitous to have Christ come and raise their dead friends, so be thou for thy self, in all that belongs to thee: Oh that this dead childe, dead husband or friend might be raised to a spiritual life.



## S E R M. XXXVI.

*An Alarm for Drowsie Formalists :  
Setting forth the Signs of a Religion,  
or, Duties that are without spiritual  
Life.*

R E V E L. 3. 1.

*Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*

THAT which remaineth is to give us the evidences or signs of a Religion without life, of dead duties, of a dead faith and a dead repentance. And although the consideration of the conversation of most within the Church, may abundantly testify what this is ; for where is there, if not in the Church, titles without realities, names without substances, forms without power? insomuch as we may call them *Christians without Christ, Believers without faith* ; They pray, and do not pray ; they hear, and do not hear. Though (I say) this were enough to bid those who would know what a dead religion is, to go to our publick Assemblies, to our Family-duties, and behold the general deportment of most men. Yet to set this the more powerfully upon you, I shall give you some plain evidences of it.

And first, *Those duties never come from any life of grace within, that are upon feigned and forced outward motives, when nothing within, but many outward considerations do move a*

Signs of a Religion, and of duties without life.

I.  
Those duties that are from forced outward motives are a dead.

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man,



men. There is nothing more ordinary then this, and yet nothing is a surer sign of death. Thus the people that followed *Christ because of the loaves*. *Judas* that was Christs Disciple, because of the *Purse*. *Jehu* that did the great works God commanded, because of temporal advantages, these had a name only, no life, because the principle of motion was without: There are many things that by art and power we make to move as wheels or bowls, yet this is not a motion of life, because the principle is without, and the Philosopher defineth nature to be the principle of motion within, and of it self; then therefore thy duties are duties of life, when they are upon genuine and unfeigned motives, when the love of God, the excellency of *Christ* make thee move and be active for God, then thou doest shine with thy own light, not with a borrowed light; of all things life cannot be painted; the Painter can resemble the body, and all the parts thereof in a most excellent manner, but when he cometh to the life of a thing, there he is lost; So thou maiest with great resemblance and applause, pray, hear, and approach to the Ordinances, but when it cometh to the life of them, there thou canst not go any further: Do then the proper and essential qualities of grace move and work upon thee in thy duties? It is not custom, formality, education, applause or esteem in the world, but godlinesse for godlinesse sake, *Christ* for *Christs* sake, this is comfortable; but if they be accidental or forced considerations, then its no more life, then if you should take a dead mans arm, and by force move it up and down: Is it with thee in holy things, as with the devil and wicked men in evil things? The devil when he sinneth, it is from his own inclination, he is not tempted nor forced, if he were to choose, he would do thus; our Saviour doth fully expresse it, *John 8.44.* *When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own*: Is it on the contrary with thee, when thou praieest, when thou hearest, these are of thy own, outward things do not move thee meerly? So for wicked men *Rom. 8.* they are said *to live in the flesh*, Why? because the sweetnesse and pleasures of the flesh do move them, if there were no others to tempt and allure them, yet they have enough of themselves

to be carried out to evil: So it is with the godly, though there were no outward encouragements to godlinesse, yet the meer lovelinesse of them, it would draw out their hearts: Oh then remember this is a great matter, when our religious duties are not from forced outward principles! *As he that is born of God*, is said, *not to sinne*, because it is not from a true and proper principle within him, his heart and nature being sanctified is otherwise inclined: So he that is in the state of sinne, he doth not pray or hear, because though he doth them outwardly, yet the frame and inclination of his soul is far otherwise.

Secondly, *Then is all our Religion and seeming graces dead*, when we are not united to Christ the fountain of all life. Whatsoever we do, not joyn'd to him must necessarily be dead. Hence doth the Scripture so often compare him, to a *Vine*, and to an *Head*, and all because as the members and branches separated from these cannot live, or bring forth any fruit, so neither can a man separated from Christ: So that this union with Christ, this ingrafting into the *fat Olive tree*; is first to be looked at, for till there be this vouchsafed, we are as so many dead or dry bones: Even as the Sunne is the fountain of all the heat and life in sublunary things, and if that were taken away, all things would be cold and dead: Thus it is here, Christ is the *Sunne of righteousness*, he *ariseeth with healing in his wings*, Mal. 4. 2. Ephes. 3. 17. *He dwelleth in the heart by faith*; insomuch that Paul saith, *He no longer liveth, but Christ in him*, Gal. 2. Do then all thy religious duties come from that powerful union with Christ? Thou dost not these duties solely of thy self, but Christ enables thee; not that Christ believeth or repenteth in thee, but his presence and power within enlivens thee to these things: So that before every duty make inquisition into this principle, Am I united to Christ? Doth heavenly vertue and power come from him into me?

Thirdly, *Those duties do indeed live which are accompanied with a tenderneffe and heavenly sensiblenesse both of our spiritual wants, and the excellency of spiritual remedies*. Where no sense or feeling is, there cannot be any life ordinarily, and

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When we are not united to Christ the fountain of life

3.

Those duties only live that are accompanied with a

tenderness and  
sensibleness  
both of our  
wants and the  
remedy.

I.

a Christians sensibleness discovers it self in these two things :

1. *A real and hearty feeling of the weight of sinne, and all the terrible consequents of it :* Even as the childe, as soon as ever it cometh into the world, begins with tears, because of its indigency ; so it is here , As soon as ever any spiritual life is infused into the heart, the first discoveries of it are by sighs and groans, till it be a *Moses* delivered from these waters, by the love of God pardoning sinne. *Dauids* Petitions are full of life, because of the sensibleness and affectionate tenderness in him. Thus *Mary Magdalen* manifested the life of grace by those streams of tears that runne from her. Not that all tears argue the life of grace, no more then all water is sweet. The water of the sea is not, that of the clouds falling from heaven, is ; The extremity of our miseries and calamities may make us weep and cry in a very sensible manner, but this argueth only a natural life, not a spiritual life. If we are sensible of the evil of sinne, of the wrath and displeasure of God, and do tenderly mourn, because God is thus offended, then he is a living spring within us, from whence these waters flow.

II.

In the next place also *There must be a sensibleness of the remed, hungering and thirsting after Christ, as new born babes desiring this milk, 1 Pet. 2. 2.* Thus and thus only are our duties and graces living, when they come from such tender apprehensions and sensibleness with it, and one duty performed from such a principle, is worth ten thousands babled over without any spiritual motion and feeling at all.

4.

Then is our  
Religion, and  
holy duties  
flowing from  
life, when the  
Spirit of God  
doth move and  
work in us.

Fourthly, *Then is our Religion and our holy duties flowing from life, when the Spirit of God doth move and work in us, and upon us :* For to pray or hear in our own strength and abilities, though never so excellent, is as insufficient, as *Samson*, when his hair is cut off. *No man can say, that Jesus is Christ, but by the Spirit of God.* Hence *Act. 2.* The Spirit of God in fire and mighty windes, denoteth that it only makes the Ministry a lively Ministry, and hearing a lively hearing. Thus *Rom. 8.* The Spirit of God is that which mortifieth sin, which helps our infirmities in prayers, and works those unutterable

groans.



*groans.* Alas, all our duties are empty unlesse Gods Spirit doth overshadow the soul. As the Spirit of God in an extraordinary way did raise up and work upon the Prophets, making them above themselves; so the Spirit of God in an ordinary way, doth sanctifie and renew our natures, it filleth the soul with power, and enableth it by such divine assistance, that the things which by nature could never be done, by grace are performed with great ease and delight. The same Greek word *πνεῦμα* is attributed both to a mans spirit or soul, and to the holy Spirit; now as that giveth such motions and operations to the body, which of it self it could never perform; so doth the Spirit of God to those who partake of it. Hence *Stephen* and others when they performed any notable exploit of grace, it is said, *They were filled with the holy Ghost.* This fire will presently make the cold ice to melt. That which *Solomon* said of hot sinfull lusts, *Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his cloaths not be burnt?* is also true of this holy and divine fire. It cannot be in a mans heart, but the heavenly flames thereof will appear in our duties: Oh then pray that thou maiest be *the Temple of the holy Ghost*, thy heart the Altar upon which all thy spiritual Sacrifices shall be offered, and love the fire, to make thee an whole burnt-offering. That as in the Jewish administration every *Sacrifice* was to be with salt and fire; so there may be such a spiritual seasoning of the whole man with a ready offering up of our selves to God, that as *Eliabs* body was carried up with a *whirlwinde*, and a fiery chariot to heaven; so our souls may be exalted in every duty.

Fifthly, *Then are our religious duties without life, when there is no settled, fixed or constant way in them;* For life is a sure, stedfast, and even principle of motion, but when men are religious upon other grounds, they move as uncertainly as their earthly interests do. The *Israelites* were a dead people in this sense, *In their afflictions they would seek God early, they would howl upon their beds, for the losse of their Corn and their Oyl, but all this was not, because God was provoked, and therefore the Psalmist saith, They quickly turned out of the good way, and their hearts were not stedfast within them, Ps. 78. 37.*

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5.  
Then are religious duties without life, when men are not fixed in the constant performance of them.

All this is for want of a living spring within thee : The Sunne and stars they are constant in their motions and operations, because fixed by God, but blazing starres and meteors they are wholly uncertain, because of the various matter of which they are compounded. Constancy and immoveablenesse in godly duties is a good evidence of life, *The hypocrite will not pray alwayes* ; The cistern will not alwaies have water in it. The Land-flood will at last dry up. The herb that wants a root will quickly wither ; and thus it is here, where there are not living springs of grace within, you shall see the outward streams dry up ; sometimes Family-duties, and then no Family-duties ; sometimes private praier, and then none again. These uneven and uncertain motions argue all thy Religion is not *per se* but *per accidens*, as we say. Thou praieest and seekest God, as a man that unexpectedly findes a treasure, or as *Balaams* Ass spake upon an extraordinary oppression, which made her say, Did I ever so before ? So thou under some extraordinary calamities or occasions, Wilt thou call to pray, have thy family pray, but didst thou so ever before ? Or is this thy constant and stedfast course, as the Sunne every day rejoyceth like a Giant to run its race ?

6.

And when they keep a man in the same posture he was in many years ago

Sixthly, *Duties and Religion from no life within, are such as keep a man in the same posture he was in many years ago.* His mind is no more enlightened, his heart is no more sanctified, his graces have not attained to one cubit higher then they were before, and I know no particular a surer evidence of a name, or form without life and power, then this. There is no increase or growth, no hungtings and desires after an higher stature in Christ, but as the pictures in the house are alwaies of the same length and breadth they were ; so are these : But growth in grace, the Scripture doth often command ; and for this end is the Ministry as well as for conversion, *Ephes. 4. 12.* And for this end are those afflictions God laieth upon us. *Every branch is purged, that it may bring forth more fruit, John 15.* And we see the Apostle *Heb. 6.* terribly reprovng those believers, that still staid in their first principles, and were not carried after perfection : Therefore cast up thy accounts, see how all thy duties further thee, and make thee increase

increase in holiness: Dost thou not pray and pray, hear and hear, come to Church an hundred times, yet art as earthly, proud, sensual, as dull and negligent in holy things as ever? Oh, if there were life within *Thy five would gain ten*, thou wouldst say with Jacob, *I came over Jordan with a staff, and now I am made two bands*, Gen. 32.10. I began poor, but God hath made me rich!

Seventhly, *When duties come not from life within, there is no fervency, no zeal, but meer lukewarmnesse.* And indeed in our common expression we call zeal and fervency life. That Sermon is a dead Sermon which is lukewarm, and is not both burning and shining; so is all that Religion and all that profession very dead, which is cold, formal, lukewarm. Hence Rom. 12. *Be fervent in Spirit serving the Lord*, boiling over, as the pot doth with an hot fire under it. The Church of Laodicea was a dead Church as well as this of Sardis, and it appeared by her lukewarmnesse. As this temper is very often, men pray as if they had no minde to it; they hear as if they did not much regard it; so it is very loathsome and abominable to God, it is a temper he cannot abide, when life goeth out of the body, then it groweth stark cold, and thus where the life of grace is not, the heat and all the duties of Religion are altogether cold, no zeal, no joy, no vigor of soul in the discharge of them. Awake then thou that sleepest, pray that God may give thee light and life, tremble at thy coldnesse, dulnesse. Oh think, Did the godly that lived to God shew no more affection and zeal to God then I do?

7.  
And then there is no fervency and zeal, but lukewarmnesse in duties.

Eighthly, *Then are our duties without life, when they are empty and not filled up as they ought to be.* This Christ doth instance in, as the main argument to prove she was dead, *I have not found thy works  $\pi\epsilon\pi\lambda\eta\upsilon\mu\epsilon\upsilon\alpha$  filled up*; there was much emptinesse and defectiveness in them: Now the emptinesse of Religion ariseth many waies; There may be a defect in the principle, when we do it not from supernatural grace within, but from humane strength and power, this emptinesse must be filled up. Again, there is defectiveness in the end, when what we do, is not for God in reference to him, but wholly to ourselves, *Israel is an empty vine, bringing forth fruit to himself,*

8.  
Also when our duties are empty and not filled up.



*himself*, Hof. 10. 1. This must be filled up, so there may be defectiveness, because of worldly and *earthly distractions*. Thus the heart is like a vessel full of holes, there are many empty cranies, these must be filled up. Thus it is an exact thing to perform any holy duty, deficiencies and emptiness may arise many waies, and therefore it behoveth us to fill up these with all grace and holiness. A remarkable character God giveth *Caleb*, Numb. 14. 24. *That he followed him fully*, there was no emptiness, or void places in his heart.

9. Ninthly, *Where there is no life of grace, there Religion and all duties are easily done.* There is no opposition without from Satan to hinder thee; nor any contrariety from within, but where the life of grace is, there is alwaies a combate and conflict, as *Rom. 7.* & *Gal. 5.* *The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* The traveller that is poor feareth not, nor is molested with thieves. The Pirate marketh that Ship which is fraughted with gold. The devil lets thee pray, and hear, and never troubleth thee all the while thou art under his power, all the while there is nothing but flesh in thy performances, here is no opposition, but when once thou goest about these duties in a spiritual heavenly manner, then as Christ was sought for as soon as ever he was born by his enemies, so are those beginnings and initials of grace opposed and conflicted with the remainder of corruption; Insomuch that the godly cry out, *Who is sufficient to pray, to hear?* They mourn under their daily sins, under their iniquities in holy things, being farre more troubled for not praying so fully and spiritually, then the wicked are for not praying at all. These things are so plain and undeniable, that it may put you all upon examination of your Religion, of your piety and devout duties, whether from a principle of heavenly life within or no. And as *Socrates* said he had done enough, if he could but provoke his Disciples to be desirous to learn: so if these things do but thus farre inflame you, as to say, Oh Lord, if I be yet in a dead empty way, If my duties and performances do come short of grace and glory, I heartily desire to have a better way; The Lord open my eyes to see it, and give me an heart to imbrace it.

When there is no life of grace their duties are easily done.

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If thus farre (I say) the Word preached may prevail, here is a good foundation laid ; And therefore let the Use be, to commune with your own hearts ; Though we are not to question the principles of Arts, and to doubt of them, yet there are many practical principles that all lay down about their piety and salvation, That its great wisdom to doubt and question about them ; as in this particular, thou comest to Church, thou praieest, thou hearest, and accounts this a Religion, a piety that will save thee, not at all diving and searching deeper ; but from what root do these spring ? What is that which giveth nourishment to all these things ? With what life and zeal are these things performed ? Oh it may make many a hearer to tremble at his emptinesse and formality herein ! Never therefore crie out of this thing or that, my company, my worldly imploiment, my earthly busineses, these dead me, for thy dead heart within, makes all without dead. Now the means to obtain this spiritual life, is

1. Diligently and studiously to depend upon the preaching of the Word, for that is the word of life, we are begotten anew by it. He that despiseth or neglecteth the Ministry is a murderer of his own soul. God hath appointed this foolish and contemptible way to make dead men come out of the grave of sin, and live before him.

2. Apply thy self to Christ, who is the bread of life, yea who is the resurrection and the life. He that did so easily raise the corporally dead, can as easily those that are spiritually. If the touching of his garment could prevail so much, how much more applying him by faith ?

Lastly, Be much with those that have life and are lively, 1 Pet. 1.5. *Lively stones* believers are called, as live coals put together, make the dead coals also to live. Thus it is here, Be much with those that have a spiritual life, they will make thee spiritual ; their heat will beget heat in thee.



S E R M. XXXVII.  
*The Leaven of Hypocrisie.*

L U X I 12. 1.

*Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie.*

**W**E have at large discovered the vanity and insufficiency of a titular and nominall Religion, without any substance and reality. And that this whole way of counterfeit or unsound grace may be laid before your eyes, I shall at this time lay the axe to the root of the tree, discover the bottom of all unsoundnesse, by treating on hypocrisie in Religion, which is here forbidden by our Saviour.

In the words we see Christ himself industriously prohibiting his Disciples from one sinne above all others, giving a very forcible reason against it.

For the division of the words, consider, 1. The circumstance of time expressed, *In the mean time, &c.* while these things were in acting, viz. Our Saviours plain and bold Sermon to the Pharisees, Scribes and Lawyers, araigning them for their hypocrisie, which did so incrage them, that they craftily lay wait for his life, provoking him to speak of many things, that they might have wherewith to accuse him: Thus they act hypocrisie, even at that very time they are reprov'd for it: Upon this our Saviour beginneth the more terribly to deterre from this sinne.

2. You have the occasion of this discourse, which was a great number of people gathered together, an innumerable multitude,



itude, *μωσαδς*, so that they trod one upon another: This the fittest subject to be preached upon, if the whole world were auditors, is to take heed of hypocrisie.

3. You have the more immediate and direct subject, he speaks to *his Disciples*: He began to say to them: Thus you see not only Pharisees and Scribes professed hypocrites are reprov'd, but even the Disciples of Christ in the highest forme; they are to look this worm breeds not in their best flowers, that they swallow not poison mingled with sweet wine.

4. There is the sinne forbidden expressed, 1. Plainly, *hypocrisie*, of which more hereafter. 2. Metaphorically, *leaven*, *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*: Hypocrisie is here compared to leaven, that as leaven hath two main properties, *acorem & tumorem*, a *sowing* and a *swelling* quality, thus hath hypocrisie.

5. Here is the circumspect and industrious manner of prohibition of it, *Beware ye*, as of that which is very dangerous, and yet by which we may easily be seduced; Its a sin, though very pestilentiall and destructive, yet very unperceivable: And then *προειπον*, first of all, or above all other things, beware of this. Hence *Matth. 16. 6.* where is the same admonition pressed; our Saviour addeth two words, *Take heed*, and *Beware*, look with both your eyes, as we say; when prophane-nesse cannot, take heed hypocrisie doth not damn you.

6 Here is the kinde of hypocrisie forbidden, and that is, of the *Pharisees*, those who were most renowned and exalted by all, Christ who knew their hearts, chargeth them with this; now it was deformed and very abominable in them, as appeareth by their ostentation, in prayer, alms and fasting: Thus as the *Lacedonians*, to make their children abhorre drunkennesse, would present before their eyes, their servants drunk, that so in them they might see what a loathsome brutish thing it was, which was likely to work more upon them, then many longer exhortations to sobriety: So our Saviour representing to his Disciples the affected and proud vain-glorious way of the Pharisees, in all their duties, would hereby make them the more in love with humility and meekness.

Lastly, Here is the efficacious argument against hypocrisie, *For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, &c.* This our Saviour spake once or twice upon divers occasions, as being a truth full of life and power. Now the question is, *What is that hypocrisie, which is here forbidden?* for *Matth. 16.* the Apostle doth expressly interpret it of the doctrine of the Pharisees, and here it seemeth to be of their heart-hypocrisie, and not doctrinall. To open this consider, That the word *leaven* is used in the Scripture sometimes in a good sense, and sometimes in an evil; in a good sense, so *Matth. 13. 33.* The Word of God preached is compared to leaven hid in the meal; that as leaven little in quantity, yet is great in efficacy, and so makes the whole lump to taste of it, when it hath diffused its virtue: Thus the Word of God, though mean and contemptible, yet is of great life and vigor, able to put a new relish and savour upon the whole man, yea upon an whole Family, an whole Town, an whole Nation. But in the second place, it is more frequently used in an ill sense, and then it is applyed either to errors and false doctrines, for they are an hypocrisie, pretending to be of God, and having the colour of divine truths. Thus *Matth. 16. 11.* *Gal. 5. 9.* Errors are like leaven, as well as truths, they quickly infect people, and their contagion runneth over a Nation immediately. And sometimes this is applied to sinne and wickednesse, as *1 Cor. 5. 7.* where either sin in the heart, or a wicked person suffered in the Church of *Corinth*, and not cast out, is called the *old leaven*; and the Apostle doth plainly call it, *the unleavened bread of sincerity*: So that leaven was a sign of hypocrisie. Now as God did universally prohibit all leaven, it was never to be used in any sacrifice; so hereby God would teach us, that all duties not performed in the truth and sincerity of grace, were altogether abhorred by him, and we are to be as carefull that we throw that out of our hearts, before we go about any duty; as the *Israelites* were to cleanse their houses from leaven, before they did eat the *Passover*. We therefore take the leaven, the hypocrisie here forbidden, in both the senses, both doctrinall and practicall: for *Matth. 6.* we there see our Saviour, prohibits all practicall hypocrisie, in praying

praying, fasting and almsgiving, and still he saith, *Be not as the Pharisees.* Thus *Mark 8. 15.* he bids his hearers, *Beware of the leaven of Herod,* which was practical, for Christ called him a *Fox*, and he pretended to be for the Jewish Religion, when he only aimed at temporal greatnesse.

First, *That hypocrisie is a spiritual leaven, souring and imbit- Observ.*  
 tering all our Religion. God would have no leaven in any Sa-  
 crifice, because it was of a bitter, puffing and inflating na-  
 ture, called therefore in the Greek *ζυμὴ ἁζέω*, as *fermentum a*  
*ferveo*, and this also, was the reason why God forbade honey  
 also in every Sacrifice, because it was *ζυμώπικον* inflating, and  
 putting only salt was commanded to be used in every Sacri-  
 fice, because it did preserve from putrefaction.

To handle this, let us consider,

1. What is in the metaphor or similitude. And
2. What is simply and plainly implied in it. And

First, *Hypocrisie may be compared to leaven, because of its*  
*puffing and inflating the whole lump.* This is so proper to leaven,  
 that the Latins to expresse a man swelling with anger and dis-  
 content say, *Totus in fermento est*; and David in some Psalms,  
 when he saith, *His heart was troubled and grieved within him,*  
 in the Hebrew it is, it was leavened within him: and thus  
 doth all hypocrisie, it puffeth up and makes the heart swell  
 through vain-glory, pride and self-righteousnesse, *Mat. 6.*  
 Our Saviour taxeth the Pharisees for this thing, *They did all*  
*things to be seen of men*: so that no proud woman did more en-  
 deavour to set out her beauty, and to make it visible to others,  
 then they did their religion in fasting and almsgiving: and  
 this you may see to be the constant disease of all the Phari-  
 sees, they justified themselves, *They were not as other men,* and  
 therefore our Saviour told them, *They could never love him,*  
 so as *Mary Magdalen* did, because they could not think  
 themselves such sinners, and therefore that more was forgi-  
 ven them then to others, yea the whole Nation of the Jews  
 laboured under this disease: as appeareth by the several com-  
 plaints of the Prophets, and hence it is that none are at such  
 an enmity and contrariety to Christ and his grace, as these  
 learned men. *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, and other

Why hypocri-  
 sie is compared  
 to leaven.

I.



places doth severely and professedly dispute against those that trusted in the works of the Law, that thought to be justified, or to have life by them; and all such they were hypocrites in this sense: They were puffed up with a self-fulness and a self-righteousnesse, so that they found no inward necessity of Christs grace. Take heed then of this tumour, this tympany within, *Quod tamen videtur magnum, sed non est sanum*. This may sooner damn then open and grosse prophanenesse. All diseases come with a fulnesse of humours, and the great desperate disease of the soul cometh by a self-love. This hypocrisie is leaven in thee.

2. Secondly, *Its compared to leaven, because it doth sour and make bitter all the duties we do.* They are displeasing and distastfull to God. They are wilde grapes, for it cannot be otherwise then thus abominable to God, because hypocrisie makes a man do duties upon other motives then to please him. They that did pray and fast to be seen of men, regarded the applause of man more then Gods love: Now this must be needs a sinne highly provoking God, when we take those gifts and duties which God enables us unto, and would thereby commend our selves to men; As if a woman should take the rich gifts her husband out of love giveth her, and make her self pleasing thereby to another man, how will the jealousie of an husband rage at this? So it is with thee, God enableth thee to pray, to preach, to fast, to give alms, and thou by these things are lifted up; Its because of men and not of God that thou art diligent herein: *Yet it is very hard to perform publick religious duties, especially which are much admired in the world, and not to lose all the comfort of them by vain-glory; yea though a man did at first set himself to such duties upon true and genuine grounds, yet in the progresse of the duty, some carnal and self-respects are apt to obtrude themselves.* Therefore Gregory did well compare this hypocrisie, whereby we look to vain-glory, or any humane respects to a subtil and cosening thief, who joyning himself to a traveller upon the way, at first makes as if he were to go the same with him, but then afterwards, when the innocent traveller is most secure then he setteth upon him, and robs him.
- Thus

Thus doth hypocrisie, thus doth vain-glory, earthly respects, at first they make as if they went the same way with grace, as if they and godlinesse were all one, as if all were done for God, but in the progresse this hypocrisie discovers it self, or in the later end. As men sometimes beginne to eat or drink from meer necessity, from meer hunger and thirst, but then gluttony and drunkenness doth afterwards creep in. Now all the while hypocrisie is thus imbittering and souring every thing we do, God must needs loath us, *This is not to me*, saith God, *This is not for me*, thy heart is stolen away from God. As *Aboloms* great sinne was to steal the hearts of the people from *David*. Hypocrisie is a great sinne and a greater thief, it steals thy heart from God and sets it upon the creature. Whosoever seeketh to be praised *per id quod tuum donum est, fur & latro est*, said *Augustine*, By that (Lord) which is thy gift, he is a thief and robber: How then can they but provoke God instead of plesing him?

Thirdly, Hypocrisie is leaven, because as that corrupts and alters the true and proper nature of the lump, where it mingletb its vertue: so doth hypocrisie, it wholly alters and changeth all thy duties, and even all thy religion. That which in its nature was to be for God, only to relate to him, thou turnest to unworthy and earthly respects, that which would have been gold, hypocrisie makes drosse; That which would have been wine, hypocrisie makes water. *Simon Magus* because of his hypocrisie was in a state of gall and bitternesse, he desired the gifts of the holy Ghost, that he might appear some great one: So that now thy piety is not piety, thy religion is not religion, but doubled and trebled iniquity: Oh how should this make us tremble at a false and guilefull heart! This turneth all thy sweet waters that would refresh thee into bloud, as the *Egyptian* plague was. As they gave Christ vinegar to drink instead of comforting wine; so doth hypocrisie instead of comfort from thy duties, from thy graces, it will represent nothing but terrour and horroure to thee: Oh tell me not what I have done, for all was in hypocrisie and insincerity, so that there is such a spiritual curie by hypocrisie upon all thy religious waies, as the Prophet *Haggai* speaks of the Jews temporal

*Of Hypocrisie in Religion.*

temporal mercies, *Hag. 1.6. Ye have sown much and bring in little, ye eat but have not enough, ye drink but are not filled, ye cloathe, but there is no warmth.* Thus it is with thee, thou praieſt but haſt not the ſpiritual benefit of prayer, thou nameſt God and calleſt on him often, but thy ſoul is not filled with good things from him; certainly this ſhould much prevail upon all, *God delighteth in truth in the inward parts,* and to ſuch as are ſo, all duties and religion it ſelf is full of marrow and fatneſſe, but to the hypocrite every thing is a ſhadow and empty, his heart is like a veſſel full of holes, no true joy or ſolid peace poured into him can be retained. Fear therefore this hypocrisie that doth thus change and alter all thy religion, that makes a ſtarre a dunghill, a pearl into dirt, and thy religion to be nothing but meer impiety and wickedneſſe.

4. Fourthly, *Hypocrisie is leaven, because though little in quantity, yet it will quickly infect and assimilate a great lump into its own taste:* For this end, the word of God is called leaven, because by its power it doth transform and change Towns and Cities, as at firſt propagation of the Goſpel; and thus hypocrisie alſo is leaven, because though but little, and creeping in at firſt, yet it will preſently infect the whole man. This leproſie on the forehead will quickly ſpread over the whole body: This cloud as big as an hand, will quickly darken the whole ſkie; You ſee it in *Jehu*, in *Judas*, by giving way to hypocrisie, How quickly did it diſſuſe it ſelf through all they had? And when hypocrisie hath ſeiſed upon the whole man, then whatſoever it pretends for God, yet it can do nothing but referre all to it ſelf; ſo that whereas the firſt foundation in Chriſts Diſciple is ſelf-denial, the firſt ſtone in hypocrisies building is ſelf-seeking. Oh take heed then of ſwallowing down but a little of this poiſon! Inſincerity and hypocrisie will quickly make thee all over ſo; as a man that giveth way to lying, will quickly have truth quite eſtranged from his lips.

5. Fifthly, *Hypocrisie may well be compared to leaven, because as that doth secretly and insensibly diſſuſe its vertue to every part.* So of all ſinnes hypocrisie is moſt ſubtil and latent; we are ſo when

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when we think the clean contrary, Who could have perswaded that Pharisee, *Who thanked God he fasted and gave alms, and was not like that Publican*, that he was an hypocrite? who could have perswaded *Paul* before his conversion, that all the zeal and religion he shewed, it was only hypocrisie? Indeed, I shall tell you of a twofold hypocrisie; A grosse, and studied one, when men do on purpose pretend Religion to act impiety, and this is a convinced hypocrisie: And secondly, There is a more subtil and close one, when men do not things from holy and spiritual grounds, yet think they do so, and such an one *Paul* was. The temporary believer, *The foolish Virgins* they were such; Now this kinde of hypocrisie cleaveth to us, and secretly creepeth into all that we do: He must be much in praying, studying and searching of his own heart, that would get this Serpent out of his bowels. This is like *the Arrow that killeth at noon-day*: Oh be afraid of this indiscernable disease! Little worms will quickly eat out the heart of a strong tree.

Thus you have heard what is implied in the metaphor. In the next place what is plainly without any figure intended. And

1. *Here we see the destructive nature of hypocrisie, it turneth Honey into gall, Wine into poison, Religion into Wickednesse.* The Pharisees shall be condemned for all their duties they trusted in, as well as all their opposition against Christ. This hypocrisie in the heart like an ill stomach, turneth the best food into a matter of disease. Why in *1/a.1.* had those religious duties of the Jews such loathing expressions used against them? Why doth the Lord seem to be as much against them, as against their prophane impieties? Only because of their insincerity and hypocrisie in heart and life. Faith is an excellent grace, because it turneth stones into bread; a man may finde much comfort in hard afflictions, but hypocrisie turneth bread into stones; Thou canst not have any profit, or comfort from those things that are infected by this sinne.

2. *The dangerousnesse of this sinne is intended also, because it is so subtil and latent.* These wormes breed in the gourd,

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and

*Of Hypocrisie in Religion.*

and consume it of a sudden ; other finnes come like a roaring Lion, this like a glittering sliding Serpent ; Therefore you heard our Saviour bids before all things *Beware* of this ; when the Devil hath no hope to undo thee by prophanenesse, he will endeavour it by hypocrisie. The more latent and creeping this disease is in thee, do thou the more pray and strive against it. Not that the discovering of hypocrisie, if we do bewail it, should make us judge our selves hypocrites, as the godly are apt to bear false witness against themselves: No, *Non nocet sensus, ubi deest consensus*, the sense and feeling of hypocrisie with grieving and striving against it will never hurt, if we do not allow our selves in it, and give way to it. This should not deject the godly, but awaken them and stirre them up. In conflict with other finnes, I can see my enemy, I can behold and observe his turnings, but this sin gets within me whether I will or no.

3. *The power and efficacy of it*, for it seizeth on the heart, it surprizeth the strongest Fort there ; and then the devil will let thee pray, hear, do all rare and extraordinary duties, as long as this is in the heart, *With their lips they draw nigh to me, but their heart is farre from me*. God complained so of the hypocrites, yea the devil will then instigate and put thee on to duties ; for the more extraordinary in them, the more hypocrisie, and so the greater offence to God ; Leaven doth therefore so sour and infect, because it getteth in the midst of the lump ; and thus it is here, insincerity and hypocrisie sokes into the inwards, and so by degrees it comes to possesse all.

*Use of Exhortation.* Be carefull to cast out this leaven from thy heart. As the Serpent casts out its poison before it goes to drink, so do thou this infecting and poisonous sinne, before thou go to any duty. The Archer fixeth the eye upon the mark before he shoots, he shuts the left eye, that the sight may be more intense; so do thou stedfastly fasten thy eye upon God, its for him, for his glory and honour that I do these things, and let the left eye of carnall respects be closed up ; Think not this sinne is very rare and seldom to be found ; The whole Nation of the Jews was greatly guilty  
th:s

this way once , and now all Christians in this respect are as much faulty : Should ye take away carnal and self-respects ? Would you not remove the pillar upon which most duties doe lean ? How few are there , who because of God , and wholly in reference to him , doe become his Disciples ? How many are like *Simon the Cyrenian*, that was compelled to carry Christs Crosse , he did it not willingly ? Of how few may it be said , *God who seeth thee in secret will reward thee openly* ? Oh that you would remember , without Truth and Sincerity all thy Religion is become thy bane ! All thy Duties , thy Alms , nay , if it were Martyrdome , is rejected and sent away without an eternall Reward ; Consider that which followeth , *There is nothing hid which shall not be revealed* , God will one day make them transparent ; every Acome in thee will be discovered , and thou that art now so confident , wilt one day neither please God , or thy self either.





## S E R M. XXXVIII.

*Of such Opinions that carry a man no further then Hypocrisie.*

LUKE 12. 1.

*Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisie.*

**W**E have already discovered the Reasons of this metaphorical expression, Why *Hypocrisie* is compared to *Leaven*. In the next place we informed you, That *Hypocrisie* doth comprehend both a *Doctrinal* and *Practical* sense Doctrinal, all such opinions, which make a man go no further then an hypocrite in holy duties; yea their proper and genuine effect, is to make their Disciples hypocrites. Now although every false corrupt doctrine be in it self formally hypocrisie, its pretended truth, it appeareth in truths colours, and dare not shew it self in its own likenesse, yet I shall not consider it under that notion, but rather *effective*, as our Saviour doth, as false doctrines do lead and direct one into hypocrisie, so that a man may all his life time be a professed scholar to such opinions, and yet never step one foot further then an hypocrite; even as learned and judicious *Perkins* wrote, That a Papist as a Papist cannot go beyond a reprobate. Popish principles *quâ* Popish, carry us to no further an expression of godlinesse, then what even reprobates have, or may attain unto.

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That there are such corrupt and false opinions in Religion, that Observ. carry the followers of them no farther then to hypocrisie. Those

that sit at the feet of such Doctors, they never go but to the bottome of the mountain, they are not admitted with *Moses* to Gods presence; They never have more then the shell and do not eat the kernel. As they themselves are whited Sepulchres, such are their disciples; so great a matter is it to look what are the Theological principles that a man is brought up with. As truth is *Cibus animæ*, the food of the soul, and thereby its sanctified, so falshood is the poison of the soul, and many have such principles in Religion, that by them they are made fit fuell for hell: So that as it is of great consequence, what Nurfes milk the childe sucks; no lesse is it what doctrinal principles in Religion thou art instructed in. We see many men living only in formality, and a meer carcass of Religion; they have a glorious form, and yet are nothing, and all because corrupt doctrinal opinions put such an empty varnish upon them: Now as there is a twofold hypocrisie,

1. A grosse, affected and intended one; its his avowed principle to keep up simulation and dissimulation. And

2. A more secret and unknown one, so there are principles What opinions which are like oil to the flame, that breed and nourish such carry no further vermin within us. *Grosse hypocrisie* these corrupt opinions do then hypocrisie maintain,

First, That held it lawfull to swear and forswear, and to communicate in any evil way, so as they retained that faith they thought true in their own heart: For not only Atheistical Politicians have cried up that wicked maxim, *Juro perjuro mentem injuratam gero*, but even some heretical monsters in Divinity, such were the *Priscillianists* of old, that held a lie, though joined with perjury was no sin, which did so move *Austin*, that he wrote a book *De Mendacio*, to confute that wicked assertion, Now these *Priscillianists* by reason of such abominable opinions, that it was lawfull to lie and forswear, asserting that prophane speech,

I.  
The opinion of conforming to any way, so a man kept that faith he thinketh true in his heart.

*Jura, perjura, secretum prodere noli,*

They would never discover what Doctrines they held. Such opinions

opinions then as these are must needs put men upon known and damnable hypocrisies, and that both towards God and towards men: Were not the devil the father of lies reigning in mens hearts, we would think it impossible that ever any men should be delivered up to such detestable assertions: But where any such deadly herbs as these shall reign in any mans heart, it must needs put a man upon all grosse hypocrisie: How is it such men do not tremble at the severe judgement inflicted upon *Ananias* and *Saphira* for lying in such hypocrisie unto the holy Ghost?

2.  
The Doctrine  
of the Nicodemites.

Secondly, There is another doctrinal opinion called the doctrine of the *Nicodemites*, who think it lawfull for to communicate in unlawfull worship, and to joyn in many superstitious usages, if so be they keep their judgements right, that such things do not at all avail us, or make us the more acceptable to God. These were called *Nicodemites*, because as he came to Christ by night for fear of the Jews; so these out of meer fear to lose their outward estates, conform to such unlawful waies, which their own hearts condemned. As *Seneca* said of his own practice in the *Roman* worship, he did those religious things, *Non tanquam Diis grata, sed legibus iusta*, meerly to obey the Laws of the Land, not that he thought those things were acceptable to God: It appeareth by some Tractates or Epistles of *Calvin*, that many were of such a minde, who thought they might continue in Popery, and frequent the Popish worship, so that they kept a true faith only in Christ for justification, and did look upon all those ceremonious waies, as meer unprofitable trash: Many (I say) out of an inordinate love to their worldly estates, wrote to *Calvin* about this Case of Conscience, but he said, they asked counsel of him, even as *Balaam* consulted with God, as if he would fain have known whether God would have cursed *Israel* or no, when his heart was set wholly to do it, whatsoever God said, though he was outwardly restrained: But such doctriens teach hypocrisie: we read of those *seven thousand* in *Eliab*s time, that had not bowed their knee to *Baal*, they would not outwardly dissemble any worship, not by the knee or mouth to kisse the Image; and the three worthies would not

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not outwardly worship the golden Image, though it was to save their lives. When *Julian* the Emperour caused his own Image to be put upon the Idols, that while the Christians did give external obeisance to that as a civil expression of honour, they might thereby be thought to worship the Idol, they generally refused it, because *as with the heart a man believeth, so with the mouth confession must be made to salvation, Rom. 10.*

Thirdly, A third doctrine which teacheth professed hypocrisie, is, *That Jesuicical equivocation and mental reservation, which by the Jesuites (though opposed by some other Papists) is maintained as a lawfull, yea as a prudent defence.* It is needlesse to trouble you with their Assertions in this matter, and they do not only affirm this lawfull in humane and civil promises, but also in sacred and inviolable oaths; certainly those Disciples who are committed to such Doctors cannot be Christs sheepe, but the Devils Foxes. The Devil is compared to a Dragon, and all his instruments to a serpentine and viperous breed, not only for their poisonous cruelty, but also their crafty subtilty. The Devil first used equivocations to *Eve*, telling her she should be like *G. d.*, knowing good and evil, which was true, but in a farre other sense, then she intended. Let not then those Doctors who teach this, hold themselves of the Society of Jesus, who said he was truth it self, and in whose mouth there is no guile. Thus the Pharisees they also were subtil in doctrinal opinions, about breaking of oaths, for which Christ doth expressly reprove them. Such Doctrines as these cannot but make men of vulpine dispositions, and most artificial masters in all kinde of juggling hypocrisies.

3.  
Equivocation.

I come in the next place to such doctrinal opinions, as may make a man a close and latent hypocrite in respect even of his own feeling, insomuch that there are many tenets and positions, beyond which if a man in his practical Religion do not go, he can never surpasse an hypocrite. As

1. *That corrupt doctrine which denieth original sin, and such an universal pollution of the whole man, as the Scripture teacheth, must needs make a man a meer outside Christian; That*  
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The denial of  
original sin.

man can never go deep enough in his duties of humiliation and sanctification, who is not perswaded of such an horrid defilement upon him. *Nicodemus* was a Master in *Israel*, a teacher of the Law, yet he understood not a sincere, gracious working of any duty in his heart; and why? he did not see the necessity of Regeneration, he was ignorant, that being born of the flesh, he was wholly flesh. Alas, there is no man doth any more then pare the nails, or wash the face in religion; he doth not change the virals and the inwards, that is not affected with this natural pollution: What made *Paul* in that religious zeal he shewed, account himself to be some great body, when he was nothing but an empty shadow? was it not, *because he did not know lust to be sin*, Rom. 7. He was alive till that knowledge enlightned him, as a man seeth not the Toads and Serpents in a dark Dungeon, till the Sunne shine into it. Would you therefore be true inside and inward Christians? go to the heart and root in every duty: Lay thy foundation even in this deep of thy spiritual vilenesse; Say, Its not a leprosie of the skinne or forehead only, but of the very heart and vitals. Now this corrupt doctrine doth still flie like that pestilential arrow at noon-day, and in whose heart it doth soke in, it cannot but dry up all the hopes of true grace in such, if alwaies persisted in.

That the Law of God requires nothing but external obedience.

A second corrupt doctrine, which makes an hypocrite, is, *Concerning the Law of God, that it requireth nothing but external obedience; if so be that a man doth outwardly conform to it, he hath done all that is required.* This was a poisonous doctrine among the Pharisees; Now as the fountain, if that be poisoned, all that drink of it are indangered, so it was then, The Pharisees had poisoned all the springs the people were to drink of, and by no principle more then this. Therefore our Saviour *Matth. 5.* was thought to preach great paradoxes, when he told them of an *heart-adultery*, of an *heart-murder*, and *unlesse their righteousness exceeded that of the Scribes and Pharisees, they could never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* If then people are perswaded, that a meer civil deportment, and an outward abstinence from sinne, is all that God looketh at; that the skinne of the beast is enough for Sacrifice, without

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without the flesh, this man cannot go beyond hypocrisie in any religious duty. In Popery, though they hold Gods Law commands the heart as well as the hand, *Yet all those insurrections and rebellious thoughts which are against Gods Will, if not consented to, they say are no sins*, whereas *Paul*, Rom. 7. doth several times in that Chapter call them truly and properly sinnes. Certainly such doctrines as these make men but half Christians, they bring down the exact and spiritual obligation of the Law to a very low degree. Thus godlinesse is not so choice and excellent a frame of heart, as the Scripture represents it. In vain by this opinion did *Paul* cry out of himself, as *miserable*, for those lusts and motions of sinnes, to which he yet gave no consent, but earnestly withstood them. Take heed then of such a dangerous principle as this, to think thou hast done thy duty, the Law is obeyed, when thou hast performed the outward duties of them, thou sanctifiest the Sabbath in all the outward exercises; Thou honourst thy parents; Thou abstainest from all grosse sins forbidden, and thereupon saiest with the young man, *I have done all these*, Mat. 19. 20. and what want is? even many things are wanting to thee; not only the river or stream, but the fountain is to be cleansed; Thou art but a painted Sepulchre all the while, such rotten, noisome lusts are within thee. It were impossible men could abide themselves, and have so good an opinion of their waies, if they did look into the pure and perfect glasse of the Law, they would then with *Paul* cry out, the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal; This pleaseth me, but doth it satisfie the Law, is it as holy and as perfect as the Law requireth?

Thirdly, *This Doctrine will make a man go no farther then an hypocrite, that maintaineth and advanceth free-will*, for this puts nature in the room of sanctifying grace. This is a wooden member instead of a lively one; this puts water in stead of wine: All that men do in Religion, though never so glorious, yet by the power of Nature only, makes but an humane faith, an humane repentance, an humane abstinence from sinne; Whereas we see our Saviour pressing to *Nicodemus* a doctrine he understood not, *John 3. That a man must be born again.*

The doctrine of free-will.



There must be a supernatural being, and from thence are to flow supernatural operations. So that the doctrine of free-will doth not only destroy the grace of God without us, but the inherent grace within us, whereas *We are in Christ to bear fruit, and to walk and live in the Spirit of God*, John 15. Rom. 8. Gal. 3. By this we come in our strength, and go out in our own name: Now as the Painter cannot make a natural apple or plum, but the representation onely, so neither can the strength of man inable man to do those things which are indeed holy and heavenly, only the outward appearance of it. He therefore that would be carried beyond hypocrisie, must acknowledge a necessity of regeneration, that a man must be made anew, that he must be *ingrafted into the Olive tree*, and when this person is thus changed, then his duties will be of a more noble and lively nature, and truly the want of this keepeth thousands in a constant way of insincerity and hypocrisie. They attend not to that necessary and noble work of regeneration; they dare not but pray, hear, fast, &c. yet they never consider whether these come from a sanctified and renewed nature within or no. Do not then magnifie *Liberum arbitrium*, but *liberatum*, that which is made free by Christ, that which is set at liberty from those snares of lusts it was intangled in, *Yea which was dead, but is now made alive*; account nothing religiously done, which ariseth not from such a spring within; unlesse thou art made a *good tree*, thy fruit can never be good. It may be all thy Religion hitherto hath been without such a bottom, and then thou art to begin a new foundation.

The doctrine  
of merits.

Fourthly, *That doctrine will keep a man in hypocrisie, which maintaineth meritorious and satisfactory compensations to God.* He will never be humble, and attend to spiritual mortification of sinne, especially he will never advance the way of Christ and faith in him, that thus confideth in his own doings, and sufferings. This hypocrisie you heard was leaven, that doth greatly puff up with self-righteousnesse, and self-fulnesse; now to hold meritorious and satisfactory works, this makes the swelling bigger, this takes off from Christ, and setteth a man more in himself, *Alth. 15.* The heart is said to be purified.

purified by faith, then pride and self-confidence do debase and make it impure, you see all those doctrines that mingle or joyn any thing to Christ are abominated by the Apostle, and this about merit and satisfaction, notwithstanding all their subtrill distinctions doth divide between man and Christ, he is his own Saviour in part: Now Christ will not admit of a copartner in the work of Redemption: There cannot be two Sunnes in the firmament; whatsoever is not of Christ, and in Christ cannot be accepted with God, neither are such genuine duties; Therefore such proud opinions as make us to give some recompence to God, must needs be chaffe instead of wheat, and drosse instead of gold. Thus also when men live in grosse and foul sinnes, and yet think praying or receiving the Sacrament, though there be no real Reformation of the life is enough, this makes a man persist in hypocrisie, how often were the Jews charged for this unfaithfull dealing? They would bring many Sacrifices, they kept the solemn fasts and Sabbaths, but yet they would not wash them, or make them clean, and this discovered their hypocrisie. This is great though ordinary hypocrisie, to rest upon duties, as making amends for our wickednesse, though there be no reformation of life.

Fifthly, *To presse an extraordinary non-instituted way as a special matter of Religion, is very notorious to make a man an hypocrite.* The Pharisees commanded several acts of worship, which God never commanded, and by the daily exercise of these, how were they puffed up? And indeed this was a great part of the Pharisees leven, they had constant washings, they had many kinde of worships wherein they trained their Disciples, and for these extraordinary things which others did not, they looked upon themselves as the only religious men, 1 Tim. 4. 2. The Apostle doth there speak excellently to this purpose, for mentioning some false teachers, he saith, *They taught lies in hypocrisie,* and why hypocrisie? Because those commands they urged, not to marry, not to eat of such meats, seemed to have extraordinary sanctity in them, whereas indeed they did only puffed up with pride and insincerity, and of this we have palpable instances in Popery, All their

Non-instituted wayes in Religion.

several Monasteries and Orders, and all those strict Rules they live by in their Orders, are but to make men hypocrites in Religion, its to attend upon outward Formalities, and to neglect true mortification in the inward man. They busie themselves in not eating, not drinking, not touching, not wearing, whereas even in those differences of meat God had appointed the power of grace did not consist, much lesse in these vain inventions of men.

Sixthly, *Every doctrine that sets up any thing beside the Scripture, as the rule of faith and worship, must needs make a man an hypocrite*; for the word of God, that only is able to make wise to salvation, 1 Tim. 3. The testimonies of the Lord are upright, and they teach uprightnesse, whosoever walketh not by this rule they cannot have any true peace on them, Gal. 6. 16. Now there are many rules set up by men in stead of these, all which work not truth at the heart; Custome and education they onely reach the outward man; and so the Laws of the Land they do outwardly restrain. If a man set up traditions, its but an humane worship, a fear and reverence taught by the doctrines of men, which God abhorreth, and so pretended revelations and raptures of the soul, those leade men into hypocrisie, while they glory and boast in these things, and follow them; they forsake the Scripture which is only the true guide.

*Use of Exhortation.* If thou wouldst go beyond hypocrisie in Religion, look to sound doctrinal principles; You do not regard the Emperick that healeth the sore, but the Physician that will remove the inward causes. Its not enough to be taught that thou must abstain from grosse impieties, but thou art to remove the cause, to go to the inward cure, sound principles about godlinesse and religion are a special means to make a true sanctified man, there may be such preaching, and thou mayest reade such books as will never make thee go farther then a reprobate may do; so that you are in the first place to consider, What principles am I trained up in? How have I been instructed, are they such as direct me to the life and power of godlinesse? May I not go in a meer road, and speak like a Parrot in Religion, things I understand not, and

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and feel not the excellency of, and all because I have not sound principles to direct me? Alas, it may be many a man or woman, if they knew there were a better and a more powerfull way of Religion then they have, they would presently imploy themselves therein; but now they never knew, or heard of other, and therefore they take drosse for gold, poor souls! The Lord give such blinde eyes to see, and wise guides to direct them.



S E R M. XXXIX.

*The Properties of a grosse Hypocrite  
in matters of Religion.*

L U X I 12. 1.

*Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie.*

**I** Now come to the third Doctrine, which may be gathered from these words.

Hypocrisie you heard was taken either for corrupt doctrines that did teach it, or practised hypocrisie in religious duties; so that the sinne our Saviour would have even his Disciples, and that above all things *Beware*, is hypocrisie. The Greek word is acknowledged by all to be an allusion to those that do act in playes, that represent the persons of other men; a poor man acts the part of a rich man; a base man of a nobleman. Thus it is in the matters of Religion, when we have the form, and appear as if we did pray, did believe, did re-

pent, when we do nothing lesse; so that its said the word comes of *κένεσις*, to compare (as *συγκρίσις*) and *ωο* is a diminutive particle, as if hypocrisie were nothing but a faint and empty comparison to another thing. The hypocrites hope is as it were no hope. The hypocrites praier is a faint likenesse of a prayer, but not a praier indeed; and the Hebrew word *הַנִּזְרָה* used *Job* 8. and in many other places, which signifieth an hypocrite, comes of a root that signifieth to die a thing with another colour then is natural, or to paint a thing over that the true colour may not appear, This is hypocrisie. Its a painting, its a dying of the whole man with another colour then what is proper and genuine. Thus you see the nature of hypocrisie lieth in a simulation and counterfeiting in matters of Religion, such outward holynesse which inwardly is not in the heart; and this you heard is either *latent* and *secret*, not known to him that is so, such as *Paul*, who thought he was bound to do what he did against Christ; or else *grosse*, affected and convinced, such as the Pharisees generally were, such an hypocrite is called *Job* 36. 13. *An hypocrite in heart*, translated by some a mocker, a meer deluder, his own heart knoweth he makes but a shew and a pretence to the duties of Religion, his inward, hearty love and affection is not to it. Now because this was the Pharisees hypocrisie, therefore I shall first treat of this grosse, convinced hypocrisie: Only observe,

*Observ.*

*That hypocrisie of all sorts, is in the first and chiefeest place to be avoided by all in matters of Religion. First of all, Beware of this, said our Saviour to his Disciples.*

The properties  
of hypocrisie  
in religion.

I shall begin with *Pharisaical* or *industrious* and *affected hypocrisie*; and to handle this, I shall lay open the Properties of it, and then the Aggravations of it. Now we may finde out the Properties by observing the Pharisees, for they are the instance our Saviour mentioneth so often. As

I.

The grosse hypocrite may be carefull to do the outward duties in religion.

First, *A grosse hypocrite may be carefull to look to outward duties of Religion, which are seen and taken notice of by the world, but never attends to his heart, looks not to keep that pure and clean towards God. Thus Matth. 23. 25, 26, 27, 28. our Saviour doth admirably speak of this to the Pharisees, They made clean the outside*

outside of the platter, they were whited Sepulchres, but within they were full of hypocrisie and iniquity. This then is a sure note of hypocrisie, when a mans eye is onely upon his outward actions, he would not do any thing that men should reproach or blame him for, to account him a wicked and ungodly man, but then for his heart, that is a noisome dung-hill, that is a pudled hole. There are proud, earthy, unclean, malicious thoughts and affections resting within. Therefore our Saviours counsel to such is, to begin with the heart, to cleanse them, to purifie them; all outward washings without this are unprofitable; God he calls for the heart, *Prov. 4. 23.* and therefore let a man be never so glorious in his life, yet if he keep not a pure, heavenly, upright heart towards God, he is nothing worth. Do not then think your selves safe, because men cannot blame you, they judge onely concerning outward appearance; Remember you have to do with a God, who knoweth and trieth your hearts, and therefore if all be not right and sound there; better all the world knew thy falshood then God; pray therefore, and hear, and professe as unto God, as in his sight, and having to do onely with him.

Secondly, *The grosse hypocrite is full of ostentation and vain-glory, he is not contented with Gods knowledge or approbation, but he is enquiet till others know what he doth. He is very diligent and over-busie, as he said, Non amo nimium diligentem,* like *Solemons* flatterer that riseth betimes in the morning, and is more then ordinary in blessing, when yet inwardly he curseth. Therefore the *Platonist* said, the superstitious man was Gods flatterer, not his friend. Thus the Pharisees, how busie and active in many voluntary worships of their own, as if this had been great piety and zeal, but Christ did not like this like this great diligence, *Who required these things at your hands?* especially you may see their desire of ostentation to set out themselves, *Matth. 6.* In their alms they would blow a Trumpet, that is, they would have it known of all, and when they prayed, it should be in the open places of the streets; when they fasted they would disfigure their faces. Thus hypocrisie made them as actors in the Stage, they did

2.  
He is full of  
ostentation  
and vain-glory

all



all things *deusivae* to be gazed and looked upon, *Ambitiosce-  
nam desiderat*, they would not have done such things private-  
ly. As when *Diogenes* the Cynick in an open place stood na-  
ked, and imbracing an heap of snow in the cold, one asked  
him, if he would do so, and no body should see him: But  
how contrary is this to our Saviours direction, who doth or-  
der all private religious duties to be so secretly performed,  
that the very left hand shall not know what the right doth?  
Search then into your selves, if you have Family-duties, if  
you perform any laudable thing, Are you not quiet till this  
be known? Would you have it come to the ears of such  
that you respect, what you do in private in your fami-  
lies? Is not this hypocrisie? thou doest it not out of love  
to God.

3. Thirdly, *Grosse hypocrisie is a constant and bold approaching  
to God in holy duties, yet we love and live in our sinnes, which  
are so hated by God.* This is notorious hypocrisie, to hear,  
to pray, to come to Church, as if you were Gods people,  
and desired to serve him, when thou livest in thy beastly and  
prophane courses, that cursing and swearing tongue all the  
week long comes to praise or pray unto God on the Sabbath:  
Oh wretched hypocrisie! That body of thine polluted with  
uncleanness and drunkenness in the week dayes, is on the  
Sabbath-day brought to worship God. Oh thou bold hypo-  
crite! Is there no fear of God before thy eyes, that thou  
darest thus to mock God to his face, though he is not mock-  
ed? Therefore thou who art so apt to judge such for hypo-  
crites, who walk in a more strict and self-denying way then  
thou doest; look upon thy own waies. and thou wilt finde  
no hypocrisie like to thine. If you should come into a mans  
presence constantly, and professe love and respect to him,  
and then in his absence do all the acts of hatred and malice  
against him. Would not all the world call thee hypocrite?  
And is not this hypocrisie towards God as palpable? Thou  
praieest, thou hearest, thou professest an outward respect to  
God, but all thy life is proclaimed hostility and enmity  
against him. As *Solomon* calls every wicked mad a fool; so in  
the Book of *Job*, every ungodly man is called an Hypocrite:

No

No such hypocrites as notorious wicked men, for they will call upon God, and outwardly seek to him, but in their lives deny him.

Fourthly, *Notorious hypocrisie is seen about a scrupulous tenderness in things of lesse consequence, but in the matters of greater moment there they are carelesse.* Not but that the true upright man is conscientious of lesse duties as well as great, and he avoideth little sinnes as well as great, but yet he doth not with the hypocrite so attend to lesser things, which are easie to be done, that he neglects the greater; our Saviour indeed saith true, He that is not faithful in little, will neither be, if more be committed to him; and he that is not godly in those things the world judgeth minute and petty matters; neither will he be godly in greater duties, but yet it doth not follow on the other side, that every one who is diligent in lesser things, is also for greater. The Pharisees were *carefull to tithe cummin, Mat. 23. 23.* and other seeds; now our Saviour tels them, *these things they should not leave undone, but there were greater things of righteousness and judgement which they omitted.* Thus when they were full of cruelty and bloudiness in putting Christ to death, yet they were scrupulous about entring into the *Judgement hall*, John 18. lest they should be thereby unclean, and so unfit for the Passeeover: Oh notorious hypocrisie! they are scrupulous about this, and not about shedding innocent blood: Thus how zealous have some been about a Ceremony, or such punctilio's, that Christ never required, yet are bold to commit all the grosse and known sinnes that Gods Law doth plainly forbid? Its hypocrisie to stick at ceremonial Sacrifices, and neglect moral duties; if the Pharisee had not washed his hands before meat, he would have thought himself unclean, but when he opposed and persecuted Christ, who reproved them for their vain-glory and hypocrisie, that never affected them: yet do not abuse this particular, as some of the world do, who if they see a man precise and strict in such things, as most of the world runne into, they say, it is his hypocrisie, it is his pride, it is to seem more holy then others; if he will not swear his petty oaths, if he will not conform himself unto

4.

He is scrupulous in lesser matters, but carelesse in greater.

the fashion of the world, then is he charged for an hypocrite: you will not do these things, but you will do worse; but this is the foul slander of malicious men, no godly man dares commit a little sinne or a great, he that dare not swear will not lie; he that dareth not prophane the Sabbath dareth not be unchaste or unclean: No, sincerity is of equal antipathy against all wickednesse; Therefore you must know that there is a *Scripture-strictnesse*, and a *superstitious strictnesse*; a superstitious strictnesse is, when a man placeth religion in the observing or not observing of such things, as are not material. Thus *Rom. 14.* some of the primitive Christians made a great matter of not eating, others of eating: Now, saith the Apostle, *The kingdome of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and joy, and peace in the holy Ghost, Rom. 14. 17.* Strictnesse in such things the Scripture doth not require, an affected piety about unscriptural-commands, is an ape, not a man; its a ridiculous imitation of godlinesse, not godlinesse it self: but then there is a *Scripture-strictnesse*, which lieth in self-denial, in loving of Christ above all things, in mortifying our affections, in *non-conformity* to the fashion of the world. This strictnesse and precisenesse is necessary; No Camel can enter the eye of this needle, that is not willing the bunch of his back should be made level. And it is this *Scripture-strictnesse* which prophane men judge hypocrisie, because there are some that fear God, and look to the salvation of their souls, and will not runne into the same excesse of riot with them, therefore they judge it their proud singularity, whenas God knoweth the integrity of their heart, and it is because the Scripture commands them, that they dare do no otherwise.

5. Fifthly, *Grosse hypocrisie is for those things that are easie, that are of esteem and applause in the world, but then for such things as are difficult to flesh and blood, or are accompanied with hatred and scorn, they will not meddle with them.* The Jews were very bountifull in their Sacrifices and outward worship, but then for to mortifie sin, or to crucifie any lust, that they could not come off to. Alas, to pray, to hear, to come to Church, and to do duties as most do them, is so easie a thing, that if this

He will be for  
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this were the way to heaven and no more; that Scripture could not be true, *Streight is the way that leadeth to heaven, and few enter therein*, Mat. 7. 14. Is it not easier to hear a hundred Sermons then to leave such swearing, or drunkenness a man hath been accustomed unto? Outward duties in the meer external performance are very easie, if that were all nothing would be so easie as heaven, whereas the Scripture maketh nothing more difficult. The *Israelites* entering into *Canaan* upon such difficult termes, insomuch that but two or a few got into *Canaan* of those many that came out of *Egypt*, doth typifie the small number of those that do indeed obtain heaven, in the midst of all their performances. Oh then know, to do things spiritually, is to climb up the mountain, to swim against the stream; Through groans and agonies thou must get to heaven; that which thou offerest to God must come from a broken contrite heart within, but hypocrisie is only for an easie, formal, customary way. Again, in Religion some things are accustomed with applause and esteem; other things with hatred and scorn: Now the hypocrite is only for the former work, as *Simon Magus*, who is called a *Childe of the devil, and full of deceit*, because they were wonderfull gifts of the holy Ghost, *Act. 8. 19.* which were of great esteem and wonder in the world, therefore he desired them, he had not left his old pride, to be accounted some great one; but the upright man obeyeth Gods will, because it is his will, whether it be plausible or contemptible, that he attends not, but only this is Gods command, and its my duty to do it. As *Mathematicians* in their Science, they abstract from the matter; They consider onely the quantity and the dimensions of such a body, but whether it be of gold, or silver, or wood, they matter it not: Thus the godly and sincere man, he only attends to the command of God, but whether the matter be gold, or wood, be honour or reproach, that he regardeth not. Thus *Moses chose the reproaches of Christ above the pleasures of Egypt* Heb. 11. The Prophets, What hard and contemptible service did they undertake, onely because it was Gods will? Oh then consider thy self! How art thou for the suffering and reproachfull

proachfull things of Christ, as well as the glorious and admired?

6.

When men will do some acts of piety to accomplish some acts of wickednesse.

Sixthly, *That is notorious hypocrisie, when men do on purpose pretend some acts of piety, to accomplish some grosse acts of wickednesse.* This is an hypocrite in the highest place; the Pharisees were often thus, pretending love to God and his glory, the honour of *Abraham* and all the holy Prophets which were before, while they were acting the greatest wickednesse to innocent men. Thus *Jezebel* proclaimed a fast when she took away *Naboths* life. Thus *Herod* pretended to worship Christ, when his desire was to kill him: And *Judas*, what charity did he pretend to the poor, when he grudged at the box of ointment poured on our Saviour? *Thus he said not that he cared for the poor, because he was a thief,* said the Text, *John 12.6.* Thus these hypocritical Pharisees appointed others to be like themselves, *Luke 20.20.* They sent forth spies that should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words; so that this is an high degree of hypocrisie, when men do industriously pretend to some piety and religion, thereby to perform iniquity. *David* shewed too much of this four leaven in *Uriahs* case, Oh saith he, *The battel fals alike to all;* be more carefull for the future, *2 Sam. 11.25.* when yet he had ordered his death.

7.

In times of danger he will desert his religion.

Seventhly and lastly, *Grosse hypocrisie doth alwaies discover itself in times of trial and dangers.* While its calm and fair weather, it will put to sea, but let the storms arise, and tempests blow, then it runneth back to the shore again. In times of the Churches prosperity there have been the greatest hypocrites; even snakes will come out of their holes while the Sunne shineth. The *Samaritans* would be Jews when it was well with the Jews, *Matth. 13.* The temporary believer went on hopefully till the Sunne did arise and scorch him; *Will the hypocrite pray alway?* said *Job*, *Job 27. 10.* and is therefore compared to the Bulrush, as long as there is wet, miery nourishment, so long it will grow. These Swallows will stay all the Summer. Hence adversities in afflictions are called temptations, because these will discover and manifest, what the root of a man is; and again on the other side, in times of fore

fore judgements, and vnder grievous calamities, the hypocrite will confesse and complain of his sinnes, but let the rod be off his back, he will entertain his old *Dalilabs* again. Thus *Pharaoh*, thus *Ahab*, yea thus all the people of *Israel*, did lie to God, as the Scripture expression is of many of Christs enemies subdued by him: Do not then beleve thy heart for what it saith and confesseth in some extremity. This hard hard stone hath only some dew upon it, because of a change approaching; This rock would never give water, but that it is stricken with a rod. Thus prosperity and adversity are two great discoveries of mens hypocrisie, whether he be truly built on the rock Christ, *who is the same yesterday and for ever*; like the Salamander such an one can live in the fire, like the Adamant he cannot be melted, but stands like a strong mountain, whatsoever windes do blow.

*Use 1. Of Admonition and Caution.* Take heed of that prophane spirit, which some are delivered up unto, to think that all those who walk more strictly, and do more powerfully professe the love of Christ then they do, that they do it of hypocrisie, out of vain glory. This is to condemn the generation of the righteous. Christ and his Apostles they lived singularly to the world, they conformed not to it, and all the godly must be in the world like starres in a dark night, they are to have no communion with the works of darknesse. Now the world gnasheth their teeth at this, and will take upon them Gods Tribunal, to judge of them, hypocrites: No thou art the grosser hypocrite, there is a beam in thy owne eye, pull that out first: Dost not thou come, and hear, and sit as if thou didst belong to Gods people, yet what mean these crying sinnes thou committest, that cry louder then thy praiers? Pray to day, and curse and swear to morrow, lift up thy head to day, and look to the ground with it to morrow with drunkenesse? Who cannot but take notice of thy hypocrisie? And as for those that walk sincerely, they matter not thy judgement, they eye God, and look up to him, their heavenly Father seeth all their integrity which is in secret, and will one day owne them openly.



Use 2. Take heed of affectation and vain-glory, or self-respects in matters of religion. This will make thee and thy duties abominable to God: Never think to paint thy self so, but that God will behold thee in thy own colours; night and day are all one to him, I tell thee if thou hast laid up no other good things in religion, but what this thief hypocrisie stealeth away, great are the aggravations of thy sin, as in the next place is to be shewed.



## S E R M. XL.

*Setting forth the great Aggravations  
of gross Hypocrisie, to deter men from  
that sinne.*

LUKE 12. 1.

*Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisie.*

**W**E have discerned the great Hypocrite in his proper colours; Now let us consider the *Aggravations* that may deter us from taking this subtil crooked Serpent into our brest; and truly the Scripture hath pregnant considerations against it. As

The aggravations of hypocrisie.

I.

It immediately opposes the properties of the godly.

First, *It is a sinne that doth immediately and directly oppose the property of the godly.* They are described by the contrary; of a godly man we say, *Behold a true Israelite in whom is no guile*, John 1. of the hypocrite, *Behold a painted Sepulchre*

in

in whom is nothing but guile. The children of God are said to be upright, perfect, true, innocent, unblameable, simple and plain. They are said to follow God with their full and whole heart. These are glorious properties, and for these things the godly are so full of worth, because they are true jewels, they are no counterfeits, they have more substance and worth within them then without, as the deep waters make lesse noise: but the hypocrite is a straw, nothing but an empty rush, a meer shadow, an image of rotten dult and mouldy, with a little gilt over it. So that nothing doth so directly and immediatly oppose godlinesse, as hypocrisie, for that leads to down-right honesty and plainnesse, that makes a man have a single heart, a single eye, he is one and the same inwardly and outwardly; but hypocrisie that makes a man have divers hearts, an heart and an heart, as the Scripture calls it, that filleth with crooked, subtil waies; The people of God are as sheep and doves, the hypocrites are foxes and serpents: Oh then know thy hypocrisie puts thee in a direct Antipathy to all godlinesse, hell and heaven, black and white may be as soon agreed as these two; The great titles that are given to Job are, he was a perfect and upright man, Job 1.1. by this he was not only opposed to prophane, wicked men, but even to such who seemed to draw nigh to God, but wanted a faithfull principle within. Conclude then, that nothing is done holily, or godlily by thee, which is not done in truth and uprightness; whatsoever cometh not from this root, is hemlock or wormwood, is poison to thy soul, and bitterness to God.

Secondly, The punishment of hypocrisie, is one of the greatest punishments, when the Scripture would expresse an high degree of torment, it saith, such shall have their portion with the hypocrites, Mat. 24. 51. he had spoken before in the Parable of such servants, that pretended to do the Lords work, but indeed were guilty of pride and cruelty, therefore he saith, They shall have the portion of hypocrites hereafter, he shall cut them asunder, διχοτομήσει, some say, but it seemeth to be too subtil, that as the hypocrite divided between God and the world, between God and his lusts, so now here, he hath an answerable punishment, God will divide him asunder:

Howsoever

2.  
The hypocrites  
punishment is  
the greatest punishment.

Howsoever you see the hypocrites portion in hell, is made of the highest degree, if thou walkest in the waies of hypocrisie expect the terrible and accursed fruit of it, even to have *weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Job 36.13. the hypocrite is said to *heap up wrath, and he shall be found among the unclean, or Sodomites.* He may expect some terrible judgement to finde him out, as they had. Tremble at that time coming, when God will be no longer mocked, when thy disguises shall be pulled off, and all that treasure of wrath laid up for thee shall be poured on thy head; of all men living thou art in a most accursed condition, though thou blestest thy self in hypocrisie, and makest lies thy refuge.

3.  
His hope shall  
perish.

Thirdly, *The temporal hope of the hypocrite which is his only support, and for which he transgresseth Gods commands, that shall perish,* either he shall never catch that morsel he gapeth for, or if he do he shall not long keep it in his belly. The hypocrite declineth Gods way, because he seeth some earthly and worldly advantages in another way, he cannot have God and fulfill such lusts as do reign in him. Therefore to obtain his end, he prevaricateth with God: God complaineth of the Jews, that it was for their *wine and oyl* they addressed themselves to him. The Pharisees were onely for their ambition and covetousnesse in all their pretended devotion; their *long prayers were to destroy widows houses.* Every hypocrite is inordinately affected to some earthly thing or other, and for this he will part with God and his own soul; but now God either disappoints them, they never get what they desire, as Job 8.13. its compared to a *Spiders-web*, that doth with much pain even unbowel her self, and when all is done, on a sudden is swept down with the besom, or else if he have the thing desired, it proveth *gravel in the belly to him*, he pierceth him thorow and thorow. *Judas* for a little money plaid the hypocrite, but what good did this to him when he had it? Oh, he thought it a sweet morsel, but no sooner did he enjoy it, but he was filled with horreur, and throweth away that money to the Pharisees again, he dareth not keep it, he dareth not hold it, *I have sinned in betraying the innocent blond.*

This



This judgement upon them, is at large described by *Job*, Chap. 8. 13, 14, 15. compared therefore to the *bulrush* and *flag*, which quickly wither away, and hold no longer then there is water or mire to nourish them: Oh then what a fearfull confusion is this to the hypocrite! He that forsaketh Gods wyes to obtain earthly advantages, either God crosseth him, so that he can never have his expectation, or else he hath his desire, as the *Israelites* had their quails, leanneſſe entred into their souls for all that.

Fourthly, *If the hypocrite finde any joy, or comfort in religious duties, its but a blaze, its a bubble, it cannot hold long, because it comes not from a lasting principle.* Its a land-floud only, *The joy of the hypocrite is for a moment*, *Job 20. 5.* what delight then hypocrites may finde in duties, in performances, its but a transient flash, a pleasing dream, this cannot endure, yea to a good heart, the consciouſneſſe of doing things in hypocrisie, depriveth them of all their peace and joy. They might have rejoyced in such performances, but that insincerity marred them all. This is a secret impostume, the *putrida* takes that infects all; therefore the same word for hypocrite is also for polluted, *Jer. 23. 11.* This insincerity takes away the live childe, and puts a dead in the room; It makes thee go bowed down, and troubled about thy religious duties: As its related of *Bernard*, who in a great concourse of people, where expectation was also great, made a very eloquent Sermon, and was much admired by all, but he went up and down perplexed; the next day he preached more profitably, but not to the satisfaction of his curious hearers, and so went without that former applause, but it was observed he walked farre more comfortably then before, though he had not so much praise, and being asked the reason of this deportment, he said, *Heri Bernardum, hodie Jesum Christum*, Yesterday I preacht *Bernard*, I preacht my self, but to day *Jesus Christ*, and therefore from this later I have more comfort; so that hypocrisie takes away all true joy, and if it cause any its dead as soon as it begins to live.

Fifthly, *In times of calamities and publick or personal miseries, then the hypocrite is filled with great guilt, for then his*

Y y

4.  
His joy in religious duties is but a blaze.

5.  
In time of misery he is filled with guilt.

painting will hold no longer. Now he is fallen into the hands of a provoked God, God hath met him, God hath seised on him, and then horror must arise every way. *Isa* 33. 14. *Fearfulness hath surprized the hypocrite, who among us shall dwell in the devouring fire?* They conceive themselves in hell presently; horror taketh hold on the hypocrite immediately, whereas the true upright man, as *Iob*, stands like an immoveable rock under all waves: Though God seemed to be angry, yet the conscience of his integrity, that he did not serve God for corrupt ends, made him resolve to *trust in him, though he should kill him*. Take heed then of this secret close sinne, it will betray thee, when darknesse shall fall upon thee: Oh the guilt! Oh the sword in thy bowels it will be to thee! When death or any other affliction shall fall on thee; in what despair did it leave *Iudas*, when he cried out, *I have sinned in betraying innocent blood?* Oh the time is coming, when thou canst daub, nor dissemble any longer, but God will make thee appear to be judged in all thy naughtinesse!

6.

He hath his  
reward here.

Sixthly, *This is a great aggravation of this sinne, that it makes a man have his reward here*: He did it for applause and vain-glory, and such he shall have in judgement, God will do no more for them, *Matth.* 6. 2. our Saviour speaking of the hypocrites, *who did all things to be seen of men, Verily (saith he) they have their reward*, here is a great deal of terrour in this speech, that vain-glory and earthly greatnesse they do so breathe for, they have it, and this is all they shall have; As *Abraham* told *Dives*, *He had received the good things of this life*, *Luke* 16. 15. and that was all he must have to all eternity. As a father will give an ungracious childe some little legally, that thereby he may not make any claim to the inheritance: Oh then let the hypocrite be afraid, lest God let him have his desire! Thou dost all things to be seen, and thou shalt be seen and applauded, and that is all. As that unbelieving Lord, he could see the great plenty *Israel* had, but was trod to death that he could not ear of it. Well then might our Saviour say, *Woe be to you when all men speak well of you*; for this may be all the portion thou shalt have: The  
reward

reward of all thy praying, preaching and professed Christianity, shall not be heaven, or eternal salvation, but the breath and empty applause of men ; So then you see, when mens ends are carnal, and religion selfish, Its a terrible judgement for God to give us them, You shall have them for your reward, when others for their sincere and holy duties shall passe into eternal glory ; You shall onely have these rattles and baby clothes, the praise and good words of men, and that but for a while neither ; so here, as the true sincere man doth not begin or end his duties for the glory of men ; So neither is he contented with any thing, but the glory that comes from God alone.

Seventhly, *Grosse hypocrisie is a great-bellied sin, it hath many other sins within it.* You may call it legion, for its many sins folded together. As

1. *There is direct and manifest Atheism in hypocrisie ;* for dare a man carry it outwardly so, when inwardly he is the clean contrary, if he did believe there was an all-seeing God ? How could thy tongue utter that which is not in thy heart, didst thou think God knoweth and searcheth the heart ? So that this hypocrisie doth directly affront the Omniscience of God. Men you may mock, you may dissemble and play the hypocrites with men, who cannot dive into your hearts, but to carry it thus to God, Oh bold Atheism ! and therefore God he will deal with thee, or answer thee according to thy pretences and duties, that wickednesse which is in thy heart, *Ezek. 14. 4. Every man that did set up Idols in his heart, and yet would come to enquire of God, God would answer him according to the multitude of his Idols.* Never then do thou think that for such duties that it may be have a shew of extraordinary piety and zeal, that God will the more accept thee : No, God will answer thee, and deal with thee according to the hypocrisie of thine heart.

2. *It argueth a base earthly and pusillanimous spirit,* for he feareth man more then God, he will do any thing, be any thing, turn into all shapes for his advantage. Therefore *Aristotle* making magnanimity a vertue, he maketh this property of a magnanimous person, that he did all things sincerely,

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candid-

7.  
Grosse hypo-  
crisie is a great  
bellied sinne.

I  
There is in it  
direct atheism.

II.  
It argueth a  
base earthly  
spirit.



candidly, without dissimulation, as *David* did abhorre hypocrisie, and such as loved the way of lying should not dwell in his house: On the contrary, pusillanimity, and base low spirits are full of dissimulation and hypocrisie, *Becoming all things to all men*, not as *Paul*, to gain some, but to save one. Thus hypocrisie argueth a silly weak heart that moveth in all crooked waies, onely for its self, not for God or good ends.

## III.

It makes God and earthly things subordinate to God.

3. *Hypocrisie perverts that due subordination, which is between earthly and heavenly things, between God and the creatures*; For it makes heavenly things serve for a pretence to get earthly; it useth the name and honour of God to obtain the creature, as if God were for man, and not man for God. The Apostle complaineth of the Heathens Idolatry, *Who changed God into the image of the vilest and most contemptible creatures*, Rom. 1. But how unworthily doth the hypocrite deal with God? he makes the name and honour of God to lackie it, and to serve after his corrupt ends, the noblest and highest things to come after the meanest and the lowest; Thus hypocrisie confounds all due order.

## IV.

4. *Hypocrisie is full of worldly and carnal fears*. Its the fear of losing goods, estates, or lives, that makes men look one way, and row another. The Priests and Pharisees were afraid to lose all their credit and glory, all their profit and advantages, and therefore they were so hypocritical and subtil against Christ; We see they were carnal fears in *Abraham* and *Isaac* that made them dissemble, especially in *David* often; so true is *Solomons* saying, *The fear of a man is his snare*, Prov. 29. 25. Fear hath made many hypocrites, many apostates; So that worldly fear predominating putteth out the true holy fear of God, which would alwaies keep men in Gods waies. Therefore pray much and strive much against this, as one great cause of hypocrisie.

## V.

And has much unbelief reigning in it.

5. *Unbelief is greatly working in hypocrisie*: For where faith is, that doth rest the soul on Gods promise, it makes a man know him to be all sufficient, to be only wise, to be full of grace and goodnesse, that he will never leave or forsake, it represents God as a gracious Father, willing and able to sup-

supply in all necessities; now because the hypocrite liveth by sense, and only by outward means, not in the power and promise of God, therefore are his paths so crooked, and his waies so uneven, and if a godly man attend he shall finde, that a close and powerful faith in God and his promises, is the best preservative against hypocrisie, for faith bringeth a subtnesse and sufficiency with it to the soul, whereas the hypocrite is alwaies wanting, and is without this and that, which makes him as wolves and foxes that are ravening creatures to be so full of subtilty.

Lastly, *Where hypocrisie reigneth, there is no spiritual sense or feeling of God, as the greatest good.* The hypocrite doth not finde all happinesse and content in God himself; if he did, he would not leave the fountain, and go to the cistern: Oh could the hypocrite say with David, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and in earth beside thee; As the Hart panteth after the waters, so his soul breatheth after God,* Could the hypocrite do this, all his disguise would presently fall off: But because he knoweth not of a better good then a creature, because he never did eat of this honey-comb, therefore will he be all things, and do all things, to have that his heart is set upon.

Eighthly, *For the most part, God will in time detect the hypocrite before he dieth, by suffering his sinnes to come out, so that he shall be abhorred by all, and be as odious as a noisome carcase.* Some temptations or other there are, which will make them known to the whole world, and so the verse following the Text, doth not only relate to the end of the world at the day of judgement, but even to this life, *There is nothing covered, but it shall be preached on the house tops.* The hypocrite that liveth in secret sinnes, while pretending to God, will have all his iniquity by one way or other discovered. Thus Judas, he could not alwaies be undiscovered, nor Hymenius and Philletus; But like Gregory Nazianzens Ape he speaks of, though disguised like a little man, yet when Apples and Nuts were thrown about, the counterfeit presently manifested himself to be an Ape; *These that accounted gain godlinesse, when gain came to tempt them, would then discover their godli-*

VI.

And is without any spiritual sense of God, as the greatest good.

8.

For the most part God will in time detect the hypocrite before he die.

nelle; *They went from us, because they were not of us*, saith *John*, 1 John 3.19. for this end are persecutions on one hand, and subtil heresies on the other. *That those who are sound and approved may be made manifest*, 1 Cor. 11.19. and when this sheeps skin is pulled off, the wolf appeareth to be a wolf, and what shame and scorn do they then bring upon themselves?

9.  
It giveth a stab  
to religion.

9 *Herein hypocrisie is so dangerous, because it giveth such a mortal wound and stab to Religion.* If our Saviour said, *Woe be to him by whom offences come, it were better a milstone had been hanged upon that man, and he thrown in the bottom of the sea*, Mat. 18.6. then this must needs discover the woful & dangerous nature of hypocrisie, for nothing doth so offend and make men blaspheme God and his holy waies, as the hypocrisie of those who pretend to serve him. *Dauids* deceitful waies of wickednesse in *Uriahs* matter, made the enemies of God blaspheme, and therefore though God did pardon that sinne, as to eternal punishment, yet he did severely chasten him with outward plagues. *Judas* his hypocrisie, was it not enough to reproach all Christs Disciples? Oh then to awe thy self against this sinne; remember this wounds Religion, it makes it to be ill spoken of every where, and woe be to thee that hast given the occasion.

*Use of Exhortation*, To take heed of this inward impostume, thy face may promise much health, and there be rotten vitals within; Every one till sanctified, is a meer hypocrite, *Totus mundus exercet histrionem*. Indeed the hypocrite out of his own mouth, and from his own waies may well be condemned; for thy desire to appear holy, argueth that holinesse is excellent, it discovers godlinesse to be precious, because the hypocrite would faine have the name and the title of it. This justifieth godlinesse in the world, but then it condemneth the hypocrite the more, for he cannot plead, he did not know such a way, he was not convinced such things were to be done; No, thou didst them, and wouldst have all take notice of it, yet didst not care for the power and reality. This is so great a sinne, that our Saviour in one Chapter, *Matth. 23.* doth many times cry

Woe



*Woe to hypocrites, and because of this hypocrisie they shall receive greater condemnation.*



S E R M. X L I.

*A Discovery of close Hypocrisie, with  
the Causes of it.*

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L U K E 12. 1.

*Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie.*

**Y**OU have heard the *Nature and Danger of grosse, convinced and affected Hypocrisie*: We now come to the more *Subtil and Latent*, which is like a moth in the garment, an undiscerned impostume breeding in the heart of man, in this respect more incurable then the former, because not so much or so easily discernable.

And the better to fathom this deep sinne, I shall consider The Persons to whom this Caution is given, *To his Disciples*, Scholars in the highest form, those that were the first fruits of Christianity, even these must take heed that this subtil sinne creep not into them; They that were to leaven the whole world must beware of this leaven. From whence observe,

*That the choicest of Christians ought diligently to take heed* *Observ.*  
*of hypocrisie in holy duties. Matth. 6.* You have our Saviour in the beginning of his Ministry, instructing his Disciples in this as in a fundamental point, he knoweth not how to pray

pray or preach, not how to professe Christ, that doth it not with unfeigned principles from within. Thus *Faith if it be not unfeigned, Love if it be not unfeigned*, is a meer shadow. To open this

Hypocrisie an imitation of grace.

Consider first, *That this close hypocrisie is an imperfect or languid imitation of true grace.* As all godlinesse hath its real nature and power; so there are some imitations of this, that in a mans own eyes, and the judgement of others goeth for grace, but is not so. As there are counterfeit jewels which appear to be so, but are not so, only the skilful Artificer seeth the difference; Thus there is a *faith* like true *faith*, a *repentance* like true *repentance*; Thousands deceive themselves about them, only the Christian, whose senses are exercised to discern between good and evil, they finde a difference. That this is so appeareth 2 Cor. 6. 6. where you have a *love* unfeigned, and 1 Pet. 1. 22. So 1 Tim. 1. 5. and 2 Tim. 1. 5. there is *πιστις ἀνυπόκριτος*, a *faith* that is not hypocritical. Now we cannot say, that all those who in Scripture are said to believe and repent, and had not the nature of those lively graces, that they did grossly dissemble, only they came short of the lively and real expressions of those true graces, and if the Heathen would say, That he who hath not the moral Vertues, that even Reason dictates, is not a man but the picture of a man; much more may we say, He that hath not the inward nature of grace, hath only the picture of it, and no solidity at all. *Chrysostom* said, the painting of tears is worse then the painting of the face. The representation or resemblance of eminent graces, without the truth of them, is far more miserable then to be accounted rich, and yet to be poor; To be esteemed learned, and yet ignorant. Our Saviour hath many Parables to describe such almost-Christians; Thy *faith* is almost *faith*, thy *repentance* almost a true *repentance*.

Now true grace may be feigned or hypocritically resembled in these particulars:

1. In the principles and originals of our actions, when we pray, believe, or do any holy duty from humane principles, from the meer strength of nature. This looks like divine and supernatural

supernatural holinesse, but it is not so, no more then the heavy earth is a glorious skie; *Nicodemus* before he was regenerated praised, fasted, did the external acts of the Law, but (alas) the stock and root was meer natural strength, but when born again, he doth those duties from a more divine and sublime fountain; so great a matter is it from whence our duties and profession doth flow, what need the promise of Gods Spirit renewing and sanctifying? Why is love, faith, made the fruit of Gods Spirit, if we of our selves can do these things? Therefore the duties done by the same man before and after regeneration, they differ in kinde, as gold and lead; he doth not pray, he doth not hear as he did, for the principles are wholly changed. Now it is to be feared, that most mens duties and religion come from no higher a ground then humane strength; They pray as men, they believe as men, because so few partake of the Spirit of Christ: Oh then take heed that it be not said, Thy faith, thy repentance is such as comes by the will of man, and is revealed by flesh and bloud!

Secondly, *True grace is imitated in the grounds and motives of it by hypocrisie*; And this is a resemblance of the choise part of true grace; unfeigned godliness puts a man upon sincere and pure motives, to do things as of God, because of God, and in the presence of God, as *Paul* said, *2 Cor. 2. 17*. Thus *David* repented, because he sinned against God, against him only; So the *Samaritans* no longer believed because of the womans words, but because of Christ himself, *Joh. 4*. Thus all Papists make that a theological grace, faith, hope and love, when there is a divine motive; when the divine authority of God makes me believe; when the power and promise of God makes me hope; when the excellency and goodnesse of God makes me love, if I believe, hope, or love for secondary or humane respects only, then this is a bastard and no true childe.

Thirdly, *Cloſe hypocrisie resembles true grace in the end and aim of our actions*. A motive and the end differ as much as *ratio formalis sub qua*, and *finis*; when I love God, because of his infinite goodnesse and excellency, this is the motive, when my love is terminated upon him as the ultimate object,



and I referre all things else beloved to him, then he is the end of my love. Now (truly) the godly man hath in nothing more to watch against hypocrisie then his ends, to pray but to what end, to be diligent in all religious duties, but still to what end, that crowneth all; when God may say, *Ye did it to me*, as he complaineth on the contrary to the fasting Jews, *Did ye it to me, even to me, saith God?* How hardly do we shut out self-respects, self-glory, self-advantages? How do these earthly respects creep in like the *Aegyptian* frogs at our doors, at our windows, still croaking within us, constant and universal self-denial is a sure companion of *sincerity*, whereas the hypocrite seeth himself, knoweth himself, and looketh after himself in all things, and in this particular it is, that the godly do so often groan and mourn, lest they be found in the number of hypocrites. They cannot go about any thing for God, but still some self-consideration thrusts in it self; then they cry out, all is marred, I have lost the duty, the crown of glory is gone, it was not God or Christ I looked after, but my own glory and respect: Commune then with thy own heart, and shake off self, as an enemy to unfeigned grace.

Fourthly, *Hypocrisie resembleth grace in the quality of it.* True grace is fervent, zealous, joyous and gladsome; and thus also the hypocrite may be for a season. Thus the Jews rejoiced for a season in *John Baptists* Ministry, *John* 5.35. even *Herod* heard *John* gladly, *Mark* 6.20. Oh then when a man findes some joy, some zeal, some delight, who would not think now I have found that precious pearl of true grace? Now I know God will love me, but you see here may be false resemblances also; and the reason is, because they are but transient flashes, sudden blazes, they passe away as a lightning, they are not constant Sunne-beams, *Iob* 27.10. *The hypocrite will not delight himself in the Almighty*, there is not a constant, settled fountain of joy, and therefore he will not pray alwaies.

Lastly, *Hypocrisie may imitate grace in duration of time:* It may hold its colour a long while. The Tree may flourish with leaves a great season, even till there come violent oppositions

sitions and assaults, even till it be thrown into the fire, and then the drosse will hold no longer, yea if there be no outward trials a man may live and die in this, as appeareth by the *foolish Virgins*, Oh then seeing here are such deeps and uncertainties, such glosses and colours, who doth not attend more to this? why is any thing more in our hearts then this? Other Sermons may please your ear more, but this will do most good to the heart, he that holdeth any truth, is glad of a strong opponent, but it is the thief that hateth the light. Do thou then as *David*, often pray that God would *search and try thy heart, if there be any false way in thee*. If you think this point too searching, too troublesome, you had rather hear only of comfort and sweet joy, let that very disposition make thee afraid of thy self; its the sign of a sick man to rosse himself up and down, while he findes some soft, easie place.

In the next place, let us consider the Causes of this hypocrisie, that when they are discovered we may the better dry up the streams, if once the fountain be stopt up. And

First, *One great cause of this lameness and imperfection, is when we make not Gods word the rule to walk by*. That must needs be crooked which is not straitned according to the rule. Now you have the word of God often commended for its *Uprightnesse, Righteousnesse*, for its *Purity and Rectitude*: Its an inflexible and impartial Rule, it alloweth no sinne, it commands every duty. A man cannot stumble or fall that walketh by its light: If you ask them, What is the cause of all crooked and froward paths that men turn aside to? you will finde its because they do not order their steps according to this rule. *David* Psal. 119. praieth for this, and the phrase implieth there is an exactnesse, a diligent method, a curious framing and ordering of a mans waies in true grace, it will not let an hair be amisse. The Greek word *ἀπλως*, supposeth there will not be any fold or wrinkle. The Word of God is compared to a Glasse, every spot, every deformity that will discover; so then, whatsoever is not according to the rule, that is crooked, and by this you may answer that Question, *How that mans Religion can be judged hypocrisie*, which is

The causes of this hypocrisie.

I.  
The not making Gods Word the rule.

according to his conscience? for *Paul* while a Pharisee thought he was bound to do what he did against the name of Christ, how then could he be judged insincere? The answer is, *That to uprightnesse is required the true rule of it*, and that is Gods Word indeed, not our thoughts, or our private consciences, for they may be as crooked and corrupt as a mans actions. A mans conscience may be defiled and blinded as well as other parts; therefore true uprightnesse lieth in a conformity, not to a mans conscience, but to Gods word. Such indeed do not sinne knowingly and wittingly, that have a misled conscience, but that is not enough to make a man upright and sincere: Observe then, if all thy straglings and wanderings arise not hence, that the Word is not thy counsellour, thy lamp and guide; Thou hadst not turned to the left or right hand if thou hadst followed those directions.

2.  
Want of a settled resolution before one undertakes the profession of Christ.

Secondly, *Another cause of hypocrisie is want of a true settled and resolved consideration, before we undertake the profession of Christ.* There is nothing makes hypocrisie sooner then this; men by custom or education, or by commands of the Laws where they live, take upon them such a Christian way, do such Christian duties, but then they fore-think not what a great exact work it is to be godly; They consider not what they are going about, how dear this will cost them: Am I able to go thorow with it? Our Saviour doth excellently speak to this, *Luke 14.28,29.* he would have every Disciple of his sit down afore-hand, and to cast up his accounts, If I will be godly indeed it will cost me thus much, I cannot any longer hold out such lusts, I must shake off such company, I must give up my self wholly to God in every thing. Now because men came at a venture in Gods waies, and meet with things they expected not, they are off and on, they are backward and forward, the burden is too heavy, something they would do; but this universal obedience, this constant perseverance, that doth affright them; this putteth thee upon shamefull retreats, this makes thee put on many disguises; there are harder things in Christianity then thou didst provide for: Oh then if thou wilt have truth in the inward parts,

Let



Let it be great matter of consultation and meditation, Will I be a Christian? Will I acknowledge Christ? Let me think what that is, I must be such an one as *David*, as *Paul*, these had none in heaven or earth but God only; its a building an high Tower, its a warre, its marrying, and therefore you are to forget fathers house, and all.

Thirdly, *A sure and infallible cause of hypocrisie, is the entertaining and hugging in his heart any one known particular sin.* He can never be upright to God, that keeps one known enemy against him in his brest, if thou be an *Achan*, a *Jonah*; though thou hast the gifts and parts of men and Angels, yet thy nakednesse will be discovered: Can *Judas* be a thief, live in secret fraud, and yet hope to be a faithfull Disciple of Christ? Oh notwithstanding all thy duties, performances and profession, thou art in a dangerous consumption, that one sinne will be thy damnation, thou breedest bp a Serpent that will at last sting thee to death; This will be an *Abolow* to thee, thou doatest on it, and it will undo thee: Oh then say, how can I say, I love God truly, when I will not crucifie this sinne for his sake? How can I say he is the chiefest of ten thousands, when such a sinne is preferred before him? Put off thy disguises thou painted Sepulchre, *God shall smite thee thou white wall*, he knoweth thy secret lusts, he can dig through the wall, and see what is doing there.

Fourthly, *The heart inordinately affected to any lawfull thing, to the comforts and good things of this life, will necessarily be hypocritical.* Never trust thy self, though thou hast ravishments in duties, though thy heart mourn like a Dove all day, yet if thou overflowest in thy affections to these things, God and heavenly things are not so sweet and dear to thee, know then the time will come, when thou wilt betray Christ for a morsel of bread, and wilt sell thy birth-right for a messe of pottage; Look over all the hypocrites recorded in Gods Word, and you shall finde them split themselves at this Rock. The temporary believer falls off, because of the cares of this world, and the delights thereof: why doth *Demas* leave *Paul*? Its because he cleaveth to this present world. Every Sunne in this orb hath

been eclipsed by the interposition of the earth; dust hath been blown in their eyes, and hindred their spiritual sight, godlinesse doth not only lie in mortifying grosse sinnes, but loosing the heart from the world, so that nothing is so dear and welcome as Christ is, neither father, or wife, or children, they are risen with Christ, and sit with him in heavenly places, *Col. 3. 1.* Oh then fear thy hypocrisie and treacherous heart, as long as thy heart is over-loving and over delighting in any thing but God: Oh cry out of those predominant affections as those that will rob thee of God and immortality! He that hath tasted of honey, all other things seem unfavoury to him: Thus the heart which hath once powerfully tasted of God and heavenly things, all earthly contents and comforts have no relish with him: He that hath drunk of this water will never thirst again, *Ioh. 4.*

5. Fifthly, *A frequent accustoming our selves to the form and expressions of holy things, without attending to the power of them, will insensibly plunge a man into hypocrisie.* He that out of meer form and custom doth use himself to holy things without the inward life of grace, makes himself at last a meer painted image; As it was with the Jews, *Ier. 7.* who cried, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord;* a constant frequenting of Gods worship without inward enjoying and communion with God, made God complain of their hypocrisie, *They drew nigh with their lips, when their hearts were farre from him;* We see it in other things, men accustomed to swear, perceive they do not so; men given to complemental expressions, never regard any truth of affections; and thus it is here, men using themselves to words and expressions, or duties, not at all attending how true they are in their own hearts, cannot but dissemble with God.

6. Sixthly, *Illumination of the understanding only without sanctification of the heart and affections, doth alwaies make a man insincere.* It makes his tongue bigger then his heart, or his head too big for all his body. There are men of strong convictions, and also of strong corruptions, these men cannot but run into hypocrisie, *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.* The Apostle praieth, *That they be sanctified throughout*

throughout in spirit, soul and body, 1 Theff. 5. 23. The devils are *ſupposed*, full of knowledge, when their wils are as full of malice against God: that the understanding knoweth best, which the heart and affection are experimentally sensible of. Now then when a man is of great illumination, raised gifts and parts, whereby he is admired in the world, yet hath not a crucified and mortified heart; he cannot but pray, preach, and discourse of those things, which though not above his understanding, yet above his heart and affections: Oh then pray this oil may descend from thy head to all the affections below! Take heed that thou beeſt only light, not a burning light.

Laſtly; Great and irrefiſtible judgements do many times, if not cauſe, yet are an occaſion to draw out hypocrisie. When men can have no more pleaſure in ſinne, when terrors have ſeized on them, then they will confeſſe and even roar out their ſins, when yet there is no truth in them. The *Iſraelites* were often thus; *Pharaoh* and *Ahab* were thus falſe alſo; and many whoſe hearts are not truly to God, yet in ſickneſſe and fears of death, cry out as if they were renewed men; we have an expreſſion *Pſal. 66. 3.* and in other places, that through the terribleſſe and greatneſſe of Gods power, his enemies ſhould ſubmit themſelves; in the Hebrew it is, They ſhall lie, they ſhall yield a feigned obedience; and thus it is with many men, when God is too ſtrong for them, his judgements too powerfull, then they lie to God, they give him feigned obedience.

*Uſe of Admonition.* See that all thy religious waies be from ſincerity and uprightneſſe; what though thou haſt light, parts and abilities, praiſeſt more then others, heareſt more then others, and with *Paul* doſt labour more abundantly then all? yet if hypocrisie be in the principles, motives, aims, &c. thou haſt loſt all. This is terrible to hear, but it will be more terrible to be ſo, *Quid proderit Chriſtum ſequi, ſi non conſequi?* What will it be to follow Chriſt, if thou do not overtake him, What will this almoſt-Chriſtianity be, but almoſt-ſalvation? yea the nearer the haven, thy ſhipwreck will be more the miſerable; I would not unſettle the gracious



cious heart, but Oh that this might go to the bottom of every unsound spirit !



## S E R M. XLII.

*The Grounds or Reasons why all should take heed of Hypocrisie.*

LUKE 12. 1.

*Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisie.*

Grounds or  
motives against  
this sinne of  
close hypocrisie

**T**He godly man you heard is carefully to beware of this secret and close sin, as well as other men.

Let us in the next place consider the grounds why he must be thus circumspect. And

First, *Because of the possibility and pronenesse that is in him, to be ensnared by this sinne.* The very caution doth imply, that we are tinder and straw ; if a spark of this fire fall upon us, it is ready to set all on a flame, *Matth. 26. 69.* What a sad instance have we of *Peters* falshood and dissimulation ? He *curseth and sweareth that he knew not Christ*, as if he had never heard of such a man. Oh what grosse hypocrisie and falshood was here ! Thus *Gal. 2. 13.* we see a spice of the like hypocrisie in him, when *with the Jew, he walked as a Jew*, and thereby through his example compelled others also, insomuch that *Barnabas* was carried aside with that dissimulation. How greatly was *Pauls* spirit moved at this, *vers. 14.* when he saw they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel,

Gospel, and he withstood him to the face. Thus you see even godly men are apt to halt and reel from one side to another, till uprightness confirm them; we might instance also in *David*, who upon that foul hypocrisie running all along the matter of *Uriah*, is said to have his heart upright to God, and to follow him closely, only this fact is excepted, *1 Kings 15.5.* What an excellent copy had *David* been, had not this foul bloach fallen upon it? And therefore *Psal. 51.* this consideration of falshood, that he had not done uprightly before God, did seem to be the greatest wound on his heart, *Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.* By these examples we may quickly gather, how frail and brittle we are. Even the strongest *Samson* may quickly be enticed by this *Delilah*, yea certainly the heart of every man is so apt to be false in all the things of God, that it is as wonderfull the soul of a man doth not overflow this way, as the Sea doth not break out and drown the Land, seeing then thou maiest so easily fall, observe well thy steps, lest thy conscience upon such defaults say to thee, as *Abijah* to *Ieroboams* wife, *1 King. 14. 6.* Come in thou wife of *Ieroboam*, why feignest thou thy self to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings: so after this manner thy awakened conscience say, Come, thou false deceitfull heart, why feignest thou thy self to be what thou art not? Why doest thou appear as if for God, when it is not so? I must tell thee heavy tidings from the Lord; Did not the heart of *Indus* thus roar like a Lion upon him?

Secondly, *As hypocrisie is a sinne, the godly are prone unto, so it is hardly discovered;* many that act hypocrisie do not believe they do so, and commonly the more confident and self-justifying men are, the more their hypocrisie is, as you see it was in the Pharisees, as it was especially in *Paul*, who thought himself bound to do such things against Christ: All counterfeiting and painting is hard to finde out. In all Sciences he must be a good Scholar that can discern between *vera* and *verisimilia*; and thus it is also in practicals, to discern when its God, or when its any other motive that moveth me to what is good. No doubt but *Iehu* thought what he did was

out of pure zeal to Gods glory, that all was out of love to justice, and the pure worship of God; therefore he said, *Come and see my zeal*; yet all this while *Iehu* did wholly delude himself, it was ambition, it was high & lofty thoughts that carried him on so fiercely. *Peter*, what confidence had he in his fidelity and strength for Christ? but he did not know his own strength. Those Disciples that would have called for fire from heaven, our Saviour curbs them with this, *You know not what spirit you are of*, Luk 9.55. And truly if in Divinity learned men finde it very hard after a speculative and doctrinal manner, to give a difference; no wonder, if in the practical and affectionate part, we are much more at a stand to know what is what; To say this is gold, the other is drosse; This is for God, the other is only for my self; if then no disease can be cured, unlesse it be first known, then this should make the godly tremble more at it, because this enemy may be lurking in them, and they know it not. Oh how many are apt to say, *God knoweth their hearts*! They mean well, they desire, if they be in false waies, to be found out, but all is from a presumptuous foundation already laid, that they did begin for the Lord, and so still continue: Oh then, who will not take heed of that sinne which may prevail in me, and yet I think the clean contrary! *Prov. 16.2. Every mans waies are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the hearts.* Oh then do thou ponder thy heart, as well as God! I was proud and not aware of it, I was earthly, self-seeking in such a matter, and did not perceive it.

3.

Thirdly, *Let the godly therefore take heed of it, because God knoweth all things, and with him they have to do in all their actions.* David doth often quicken himself up with this, *That God knoweth the heart, he searcheth and trieth the reins*: Oh this would be an excellent antidote against every false way! Yea not only that God knoweth it, but that he will discover and bring it to light, as followeth in this next verse, not onely those grosse sinnes secretly committed, but all those hidden thoughts, and counsels of the heart, with what spirit, with what frame of soul thou didst every thing. yea he hath appointed a day of judgement, when the counsels of



of mens hearts shall be disclosed to all the world, 1 Cor. 4 5. do things therefore with no other heart and thoughts then thou wouldst have all the world know it. How wouldst thou be ashamed if men should see that vain-glory, those earthly respects that yet are too much stirring in thee? Know that God will one day make all this manifest.

Fourthly, *Therefore take heed of hypocrisie, because the greatest and most excellent duties are not regarded where this is, and very great failings and infirmities are pardoned where sincerity is.* Did not *Jehu* do remarkable exploits for God? yet all was but a bulrush in the mire. Had not *Saul* many commendable things in him? yet this hypocrisie totally marred him. Was not *Judas* one of the lights of the world, and the salt to season the whole earth? yet he was unfavoury salt himself, because he had not sincerity: So that truth and uprightness is in effect the marrow and substance of all Religion. If Faith be sincere, if Love be unfeigned, then Gods love will cover a multitude of thy other infirmities; but take this foundation away, and all falls to the ground. We read of many of the godly, sometimes for their spiritual condition like *Lazarus* in his body, full of sores, yet the precious Robes of Christs Righteousnesse covered them, because they were upright for the main: Oh how happy is this, when thou canst come into Gods presence, and truly say, O Lord, though I am bowed by many infirmities, though weaknesses are more then the hairs of my head, yet the bent and inclination of my soul is really and sincerely towards thee! This prevaileth much with God: As the Father is greatly pitying his childe, when he seeth him faint and weak, yet very willing to do his commands. On the other side, when some come with a glorious flourish, saying, *Have not we prophesied? Have not we wrought miracles?* God shall say to them, There was a bitter root within from whence all this did flow, man did not see it, but God did; this will undoubtedly be the bitter herb in the porrage: What can be a greater reason, why the godly should preserve this precious frame of spirit, then considerations

4.

from hence, All is well, or all ill is forgotten, where uprightnes doth prevail.

5. Fifthly, *They have cause to watch against hypocrisie, because of the doubtings and disconsolate objections it brings.* The hypocrite hath not any true solid peace or joy, it cannot be that he should be without many black clouds upon his heart. For seeing he doth not give all diligence to make his calling sure, but he is off and on, backward and forward; this putteth him into such consolations as his duties are; they are uncertain, and so are these; they float up and down, so do his hopes, *Iam. 1. A double minded man is inconstant in all his waies*; and therefore as his duties so his comforts are; sometimes they are lifted up to the heavens, and again they fall as low to the earth, and it cannot be otherwise, for *1 Iohn 3. If our hearts condemn us not, then have we boldnesse with him*; now the hypocrites heart because it doth not fully close with God, is therefore like a ship without an Anchor, in danger of being splitted at every rock.

6. Sixthly, *Above all things take heed of hypocrisie, because there is no temptation or grief of minde more terrible then to lie under this fear, that thou art an hypocrite, that all is rotten in thee.* For although many times those whose hearts are most sincere, do walk in this darknesse, and they fear it most, who have cause to fear it least, yet it is an unpeakable sad thing, when we walk so falsely and deceitfully, as to give just occasion for such doubts to be raised in our hearts. Oh this is an heavy stone that cannot easily be rolled away! To have it set upon thy heart, and this furthered by the devil, that all thou doest is in hypocrisie, in guile; that therefore the promises of Christ and grace do not belong to thee; what comes nearer hell then this condition? If so be therefore any thing may prevail with us to walk uprightly, let the consideration of those woes and wounds, and troubles that will fall upon thee, make thee avoid hypocrisie; This will *Solem è mundo tollere*, take the Sun out of thy little world; This will raise up a great gulf between thee and Gods favour, who knoweth when this black cloud will flie over? This may make thee go lame to the grave. On the other side, for a man to have a good testimonie

nie and assurance of his integritie, is the greatest refreshment in the world, *Iob 33.23.* There we have *Elihu* enlarging his discourse concerning that man who is bound in the chains of his sins, and kept in sad darknesse, *If there be a messenger, an interpreter, one amongst a thousand, to shew man his uprightness, then he is gracious unto him; His flesh shall be fresher then a childes, He shall pray unto God, and he shall see his face with joy.* See here, when a man comes to know he is upright, that temptations of hypocrisie do not overwhelm him any more; then he that even bodily decayed and pined away, doth grow fresh, and he that could not pray, had no heart to it, found himself afraid to pray, shall pray and have much joy: Oh then, who is there that feareth God, that knoweth how bitter a thing it is to lie under Gods frowns? how insupportable to be kept at a distance from God, and to have nothing but discouragements from within? who (*Isay*) that knoweth these things experimentally will not take heed of that sinne, which above all other doth make the soul thus bleed, and is hardly stenchd?

Seventhly, *Take heed of hypocrisie, because it puts a man out of Gods protection, out of his care and love.* First, it puts a man out of Gods way, and then out of his favour and promise to help, for the hypocrite is his own carver, he will not trust God, he followeth his own carnal advantages, and thus God lets him alone to save himself, to reap the fruit of his own folly and wickednesse, *Pro. 10.9.* *He that walketh uprightly walks safely, securely.* Then the hypocrite is fearfull and doubtfull, he cannot cast his burden upon the Lord; neither will the Lord take care for him; but as for the upright man, many glorious promises are made to him, *Psal. 37.37.* he calls all the world *To mark the end of an upright man, to see if for the most part it be not peace;* and where any sad afflictions have befallen them, as upon *David*, sometimes it was for their haling before God. How comfortable is that *Isa. 57.2.* *He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.* Oh then, what terrour should this be! The hypocrite who trusteth to his crafty counsels, to his power and strength, will adhere to his own lust, rather then Gods Word, consulting with flesh



and blood in all things, he puts himself out of Gods favour: He doth as if one in the Ark would wilfully have thrown himself out of the Ark into the waters; what safety could he then expect? You have a pregnant instance in this concerning *Aſa*, 2 Chron. 16. 8, 9. *Aſa* while he relied on the Lord, God delivered him, but when he trusted in the King of *Aſſyria*, he had done foolishly, and from that time he should never be without warre: *For the eye of the Lord runneth to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong for the upright.* There needs no Stars when we have this Sun; Who may not ſay of this Text, Lord it is enough, it ſufficeth.

8. Eighthly, *Beware above all things of hypocrisie, becauſe it is our duty to be reſtored to that holy and heavenly eſtate from whence we are fallen*, Now that is a ſtate of uprightneſſe, *Eccleſ. 7. 29. God made man upright, and the image of God is ſaid to be in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe.* *Adam* had an univerſal rectitude in all the parts of his ſoul, he was wholly Gods; all the Love he had, all the underſtanding he had, all the ſtrength he had, it was ſolely for God, and not any creature. Seeing then that holy and righteous eſtate we were created in, was thus perfect and compleat, how ſhould we breathe and pant after that eſtate again? Oh it would not have been thus once! our hearts would not have had ſuch flaws and deceitful leakings as now they have: This is ſo contrary to that holy image which is to be repaired in thee, that all thy endeavour ſhould be, that it be true holineſſe, not only holineſſe, but true holineſſe.

2. Ninthly, *Take heed of this, for this only in ſome ſenſe may be ſaid to be the breach of the Covenant*; for as that though it require perfection of grace, yet is content with truth; ſo hypocrisie is that which violateth this command. Hence are thoſe expreſſions of ſeveral Kings, they did many things, but they did not walk perfectly as *David* did: When God requireth of us to love him with all our heart, our ſoul and ſtrength, this cannot be any further fulfilled in this life, then by truth and ſincerity; a true heart is the whole heart, a true ſoul is the whole ſoul. A godly man whoſe graces are weak and imperfect, may in an Evangelical ſenſe be ſaid to fulfill this command;

mand; but where hypocrisie is, there is rottenness at the core; there cannot be any claim made to pardon of sinne or eternal life. Imperfect grace is still grace, but feigned grace is none at all; a man is a man, though unsound and sickly, but a picture of a man is no man at all; so that hypocrisie takes away the very essence and true nature of grace, it strikes all dead immediately.

To this Doctrine an Objection may be made, If godly men are obnoxious to hypocrisie, if they may know and discern this in themselves, how then shall he difference himself from a convinced hypocrite? Doth not the Apostle say, *1 Ioh. 3. 20. If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts?* and therefore the discovery of hypocrisie in our selves, may make us cast away all our hopes.

To this the Answer is easie, 1. It cannot be denied but that hypocrisie as well as other sinnes, doth in some measure abide in the godly, *Every man is a liar*, saith the Apostle, *Rom. 3. 4.* and this lie, this falshood in every man, hath its stumps still, though the main branches be lop'd down, who can say he hath such a pure single eye, that it looketh on God directly, that it never is cast asquint? who can say he alwaies hit-teth the mark, that there are no dregs in his wine at all? But yet though this be so, and the godly know it, yet in the second place, they bewail it, they bemoan it; This guile and deceitful heart is an heavy burden, and a great confusion to them. You see *David* cried out, that he was a blessed man whose sinne was pardoned, and in whose spirit there is no guile, *Psalm. 32. 2.* How often doth *David* pray that God would deliver him from lying and from every false way? How often doth he pray that his steps be directed, that he may walk in even paths? But it is not thus with the notorious hypocrite, he knoweth it, and is not troubled at it, but rather rejoyceth to see himself thrive in it. Did the Pharisee bewail that he was but a painted wall, that he was a whited Sepulchre? Did he look on himself as abominable to God and man? No, but in all things justified himself. 2. The godly mans hypocrisie is but gradual, not total; Its but in some measure or degree, and its decaying and languishing daily, because uprightness of

of heart is stronger : He that is born of God hath this image of righteousness and true holiness repaired in him, and although there may be many combats and conflicts, yet grace and truth will prevail at last. As it is with falsehood and truth in doctrinals, we say, Truth will at last prevail, the Sun will overcome the night ; though it may be under a bushel for a while, yet at last it will get into a Candlestick ; like Christ himself, the grave that seemed to swallow him up, did not overcome him : so it is here with truth and falsehood in practicals, The plainness and uprightness of the godly will by degrees consume that falsehood ; and thus you see there is a great difference between these two.

To conclude this Text and subject, Let this daily and continual dropping of this necessary truth at last soften and mollify your heart, let these many sparks of fire kindle in your breast. You see as long as this worm is in thy best flowers, they cannot but die. Beware of it first of all, you pray, you hear, but above all things beware of hypocrisie in them. Thou art but an Idol in Christianity, having eyes thou doest not see, or rightly understand in religion, till this foundation be laid : how loathsome is hypocrisie to man ? To think one thing in your heart, and to speak another thing, *ἐχθρὸς ὡς αἰδωο*. The Prophet *Jeremiah* doth notably instance such men, *Chap. 41. 2, 3.* compared with 20. Oh take heed of this kinde of hypocrisie ! Thou maiest pray to God, desire to be directed in his way, while thy heart is pitched what to do, but though God or his Word command the contrary, yet for all that prayer and supplication thou wilt do it. You see its a dangerous thing for a mans heart to be set this way or that, and then pray to God to direct him, for this is but hypocrisie. Thou must not prevent or anticipate God in prayer, but with *Paul* resign thy self, and say, *Lord, What wilt thou have me to do ?*



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